

Hitler's Third Reich – Issue 16

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HITLER'S

Third Reich

Volume
16
Monthly

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Loyalty or death

Hans Frank

Hitler's Advocate

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Richard Wagner

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HITLER'S Third Reich

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Publisher: Stan Morse
Editor: Chris Bishop
Deputy editor: Adam Warner
Art Director: Steve Horton
Illustrator: Chris Bishop
Photography: David Tosh
Writers: Chris Bishop, Kurt Steiner,
Adam Warner, William Wilson

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Hitler worshipped Wagner as one of the three truly great Germans – the others being Martin Luther and Frederick the Great. The Führer had no doubt that posterity would view himself as the fourth.



HITLER and Wagner

Richard Wagner's music became the sound track to the Third Reich. As an overt anti-semitic and exponent of German superiority the composer was also the Nazis' ideological forefather.



Above: Richard Wagner (1813-1883) poses for posterity in 1870. He and the Führer had much in common, beyond writing autobiographies at a risibly young age. They were both arrogant, manipulative egocentrics.



Left: Houston Stewart Chamberlain (right) with his father and son in 1910. He left behind his native England, taking German citizenship in 1916. He was a leading voice among the many calling for the 'cleansing' of Jews from Europe.

Below: Dietrich Eckart (1868-1923) was an early mentor to Hitler, and introduced the future dictator to the Wagner family.



ACCORDING TO August Kubizek, Hitler's long-suffering childhood friend, the Führer's admiration for the great Romantic German composer Richard Wagner knew no bounds. A performance could affect him like a religious experience, plunging him into deep and mystical fantasies. For Hitler, Wagner was the supreme artistic genius and a great role model. Hitler the boyhood dreamer was entranced by Wagner's evocation of an heroic, distant and sublimely mystical Germanic past.

Of course Hitler was only one of thousands of Wagner fanatics who flocked to Linz around the turn of the century to hear the music. Wagner was the vindication of the heart over the head and the *Volk* over the mass. His music was about the revolt of the young and vital against the old and ossified. Hitler was in Linz when the Wagner cult was at its height. For him listening to Wagner was "the opportunity of being transported into that extraordinary state, that trance... that escape into a mystical dream world. When I hear Wagner I hear rhythms of a bygone world". It was an heroic world of superlatives and massive drama, far distanced from the mundane realities and compromises of life.

All of the heroes portrayed in Wagner – Rienzi, Tannhäuser, Siegfried and Parsifal – were outsiders.

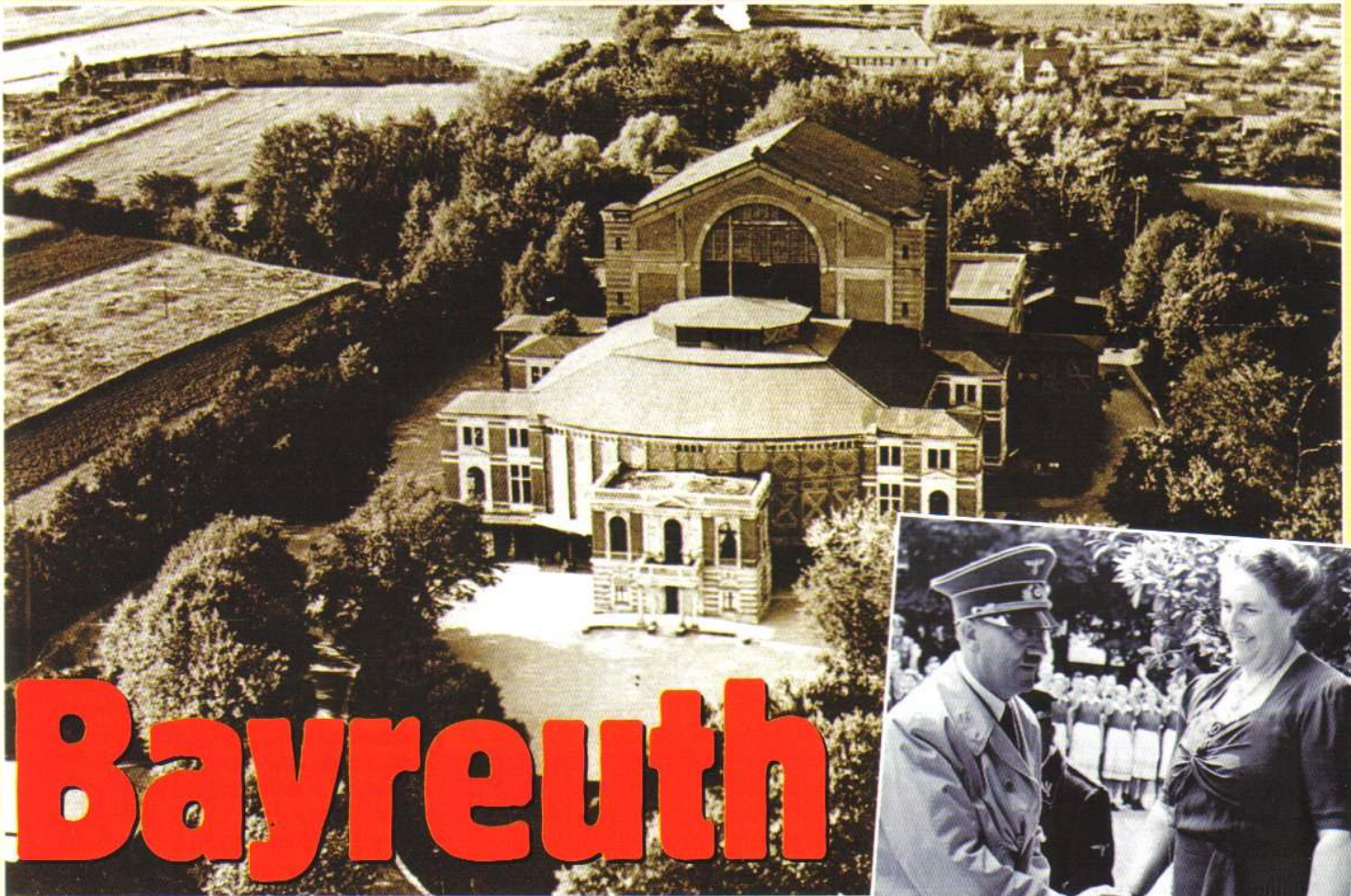
WAGNER IN THE BUNKER

Lohengrin was Hitler's first and favourite Wagner opera. In this saga a teutonic super-hero and knight of the Holy Grail is sent from the castle Monsalvat, by his father Parsifal, to rescue a falsely condemned maiden Elsa. Not so pure as *Lohengrin* was led to believe, Elsa eventually betrays him.

Another of the Führer's favourites was *Rienzi*, and its score was one of the few personal possessions that Hitler took with him into the Berlin bunker in 1945. Rienzi, another martyr, was a messianic Roman tribune who sacrificed himself to cleanse Rome of its degenerate nature. Ultimately however, *Rienzi* is destroyed by the people he has come to save.

The opera was one of Wagner's early efforts, and the self-proclaimed genius would have had it burned if he had not been continually in debt and dependent on its royalties. In later years, the Nazis learned to love its pompous grand march, which became an unofficial party anthem.

On first seeing the opera Hitler took Kubizek on a long nocturnal climb up the Feinberg and, in a state of near ecstasy, lectured him on what they had just seen. When Hitler was reminded of this occasion



RICHARD WAGNER constructed a purpose-built opera house at Bayreuth solely to perform his works. The first festival was staged in 1876 under his artistic control and productions were mounted in an annual festival from 1883. Bayreuth quickly became a place of pilgrimage for nationalists wanting to worship at this 'Temple of Teutonism'.

Richard's wife Cosima, who was Franz Liszt's daughter, oversaw the festivals after her husband's death. Cosima was in turn succeeded by her English-born daughter-in-law Winifred. Under the latter's direction the festivals took on a more extreme *nationalist-völkisch* character.

It was whilst she was director that Hitler first started attending the festivals. His youthful fanaticism for Wagner had never left him. Hitler regarded the festival as sacrosanct and when he visited Bayreuth in the early 1930s, before his seizure of power, he arrived incognito. It was the only occasion on which he deliberately refused an opportunity to make political capital.

After 1933 Hitler elevated the festivals into '*nationale Weihe-spiele*', or 'Performances of National Consecration'. The Nazis deliberately exploited the racist and anti-Semitic elements found in most of Richard's work, and Wagner's music was destined to become the soundtrack to the Third Reich.

Hitler subsidised the annual productions by granting Winifred generous tax breaks, and Wieland Wagner, one of her two sons, was exempted from military service so that he could assist in the staging.

Hitler's last visit to the Bayreuth Festival was on 23 July 1940, when prophetically, he attended *Götterdämmerung*. This opera is the last in The Ring Cycle and at its climax Valhalla, the home of the gods, is destroyed.

Such high-profile patronage brought Bayreuth to the unwelcome attention of the denazification authorities after Germany's defeat. Between 1945-51 the Allies prohibited the festival. Wagner's music continued to be reviled for decades after the war and is understandably still refused public performance in Israel.

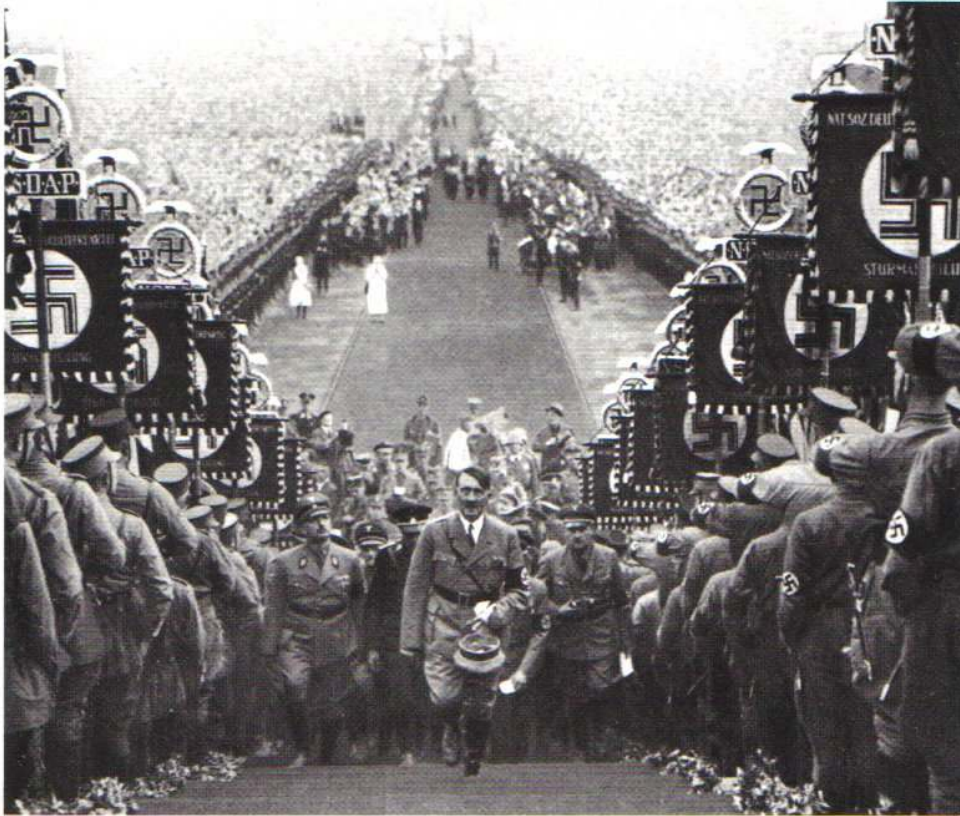
Above: As Hitler built his own arenas to deliver his message to the world, so Wagner considered that only a theatre after his own design was suitably great enough for his operas.



Above right: Winifred Wagner's enthusiasm for Hitler ensured that he would always be a welcome and frequent visitor to the home. Siegfried - Winifred's husband - was not so enamoured of the self-opinionated and shabbily clothed guest that he first met in 1923. He thought Hitler "a fraud and an upstart".

Below: A still from a Bayreuth staging of 'The Mastersingers of Nuremberg'. The Nazis considered this opera to be a classic statement of Teutonic Aryan supremacy. The work ends with the humiliation of the Jewish pseudo-artist Beckmesser.





Above: Hitler climbs the Bückeberg in 1934, ready to make a speech praising the German farmer. Under Goebbels's direction, such Nazi events were huge spectacular sight and sound entertainments. The strains of Wagner's greatest music would echo in the Führer's head as he ascended the dais.

Below: Hitler in formal evening dress pays obeisance to the daughter-in-law of his greatest hero. Never a man of great cultural achievement or understanding, Hitler nevertheless enjoyed immersing himself in the great music dramas of the Meister.



by Kubizek on a visit to Bayreuth in 1939, Hitler said to the assembly: "In that hour it began". Kubizek, an accomplished musician, wrote of young Adolf's determination to write an opera himself. This project was to be called 'Wieland The Smith'. It is no great loss to western music that Hitler's opera never got beyond the planning stage.

Betrayal, sacrifice and heroic death, the three key themes in Wagner's operas, were resonant themes for Hitler as well. The dreamer and fantasist, the drop-out and unrecognised artistic genius refused entry to Vienna art school, found solace in the master of Bayreuth. Hitler the nonentity, the mediocrity, the failure wanted to live like the Wagnerian hero. For the embittered young Adolf, Wagner was the exemplar of what in his rejection and increasing identity crisis he thought that he could never become: the philosopher king, the genius and the giant to move worlds and shatter old orders.

GÖTTERDAMMERUNG

Yet Hitler became what he wished for, and his downfall was suitably Wagnerian. Like Rienzi he believed that he had been betrayed by the people providence had brought him on earth to save. In his final days he railed against the German nation for its weakness and ordered Speer to destroy the nation's infrastructure from top to bottom. He wanted to die in a great Wagnerian funeral pyre.

Among its earliest advocates the NSDAP could count on many members of the Thule Society, an extreme right-wing anti-republican organisation. Some of its members were well-connected and wealthy. One such was Dietrich Eckart. Through him Hitler was introduced to the descendants of Richard Wagner, ensconced in the family home in Bayreuth. English-born Winifred Wagner was Richard's daughter-in-law, married to Wagner's son Siegfried. She became a committed Nazi, influenced in no small part by Wagner's son-in-law Houston Stewart Chamberlain. This expatriate Briton was a great enthusiast of Wagner and as a member of his inner circle took a leading role in propagating the *volksisch* and racial philosophy of the *meister*.

CHRISTIAN ETHNIC CLEANSING

More than any other person it was Chamberlain who constructed an ideological bridge between Wagnerism and the broader traditions of nationalist and racist thought. Hitler initially read Chamberlain as early as 1920, and freely acknowledged his debt to the philosophy found in *Die Grundlagen des 19. Jahrhunderts* – Foundations of the Nineteenth Century. This asserted that the Jews were a destructive force, and pleaded for the cleansing of Jewish elements from Christendom. For Chamberlain, the Germanic peoples were the most culturally creative, and the least depleted in spirit of all the northern races was the German *Volk*.

This was the family Hitler met. He made his first visit to Wahnfried or 'Peace from Folly' in October 1923. Transfixed by being in the home of his hero, he tiptoed around the former possessions of Richard Wagner in the music room and library "as though he were viewing relics in a cathedral".

Winifred assisted Hitler from their earliest meetings, and provided food packages and paper for the writing of *Mein Kampf* whilst he was in Landsberg after the 1923 Putsch. More importantly for the friendless Führer, she provided him with some sort of family, and her children Wieland and Wolfgang were brought up to call Hitler 'Uncle Wolf'. Winifred was quickly convinced of the young demagogue's abilities, and thought that he was "destined to be the saviour of Germany".

WAGNER'S IDEOLOGY

Debate on the influence of Wagner's radical nationalism on Nazi ideology is intense, with historians posing the question: Just how much responsibility should Richard Wagner carry for both the rampant nationalism of Germany in the 1930s, and for the tragedy and horror of the Final Solution?



The finale of *Die Meistersinger* was borrowed by the Nazis as a set piece at their rallies – the final scene of the opera is a celebration of German nationalism. Nazi commentators, never known for their aesthetic finesse, approved of the opera for its “strong profession of Germanness”. More nonsensically they said that it was “art nourished from the primeval spring of *Volk* energy”. Joseph Goebbels was gushingly enthusiastic: “no work was so close to our age in its spiritual and intellectual tensions”. The Nazis also applauded the overt anti-Semitism in the opera as the central character Beckmesser – a Jew – gets his come uppance.

WAGNER'S ANTI-SEMITISM

Wagner was a confirmed anti-Semite who embraced the racist theories of Comte Arthur de Gobineau. This failed diplomat published a totally specious work which justified the exploitation of races through imperialism. He held that blacks and Semites were inferior to so-called higher races, such as the Aryans and Teutons. The theories were not subtle and were readily used by agitators seeking support on the backs of the disenfranchised.

Gobineau's work became a classic statement of Aryan supremacy:

“Beware! Evil threatens us. If the German *Volk* should one day fall to foreign rule, no prince will understand his people anymore, and foreign vanities will flourish in our land.”

Wagner's pernicious anti-Semitism was not restricted to his music dramas. He published one pamphlet called *Das Judentum in der Musik* or ‘Jews in Music’. In it he claimed that his Jewish contemporaries were responsible for everything that was wrong with modern music. This rhetorical garbage was written after Wagner travelled to Paris in the early 1840s. He had gone there, opera in hand, to win the patronage of the popular Jewish composer Meyerbeer. The latter failed to recognize Wagner for the genius that he thought himself to be.

THE RING

The greatest – or at least the longest – of Wagner's operas is the monumental ‘Ring’ cycle, running an average of 15 hours. It is an epic of lust, power, revenge and ultimate destruction in a world of gods and mortals. It is a unique work of art. But does the Ring, as many critics have claimed, have any place in Nazi theory? There are numerous contradictory arguments: just take your pick.

The Irish dramatist George Bernard Shaw held that the Ring was a socialist fable about

the fall of capitalism. ‘All property is theft’, and the fall of the gods in the burning of Valhalla is the logical end of a society in which greed has replaced love as the main goal of mankind. By contrast, the theories of philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer held that Wotan, the most powerful God, is the personification of the Will of the World, which will end up annihilating itself. A third interpretation is based on Freudian-Jungian psychology which believes that the Ring is about the development of consciousness.

WAS WAGNER GUILTY?

Whatever your view, Hitler was passionate about the Ring. He sponsored all Wagner's operas as expressions of the heroic German world view. He also had a preference for reworking material from the middle-ages. The festivals were lauded as *Nationale Weihespiele*, a perfect combination of German musical art and German poetic art. No doubt Richard would have approved.

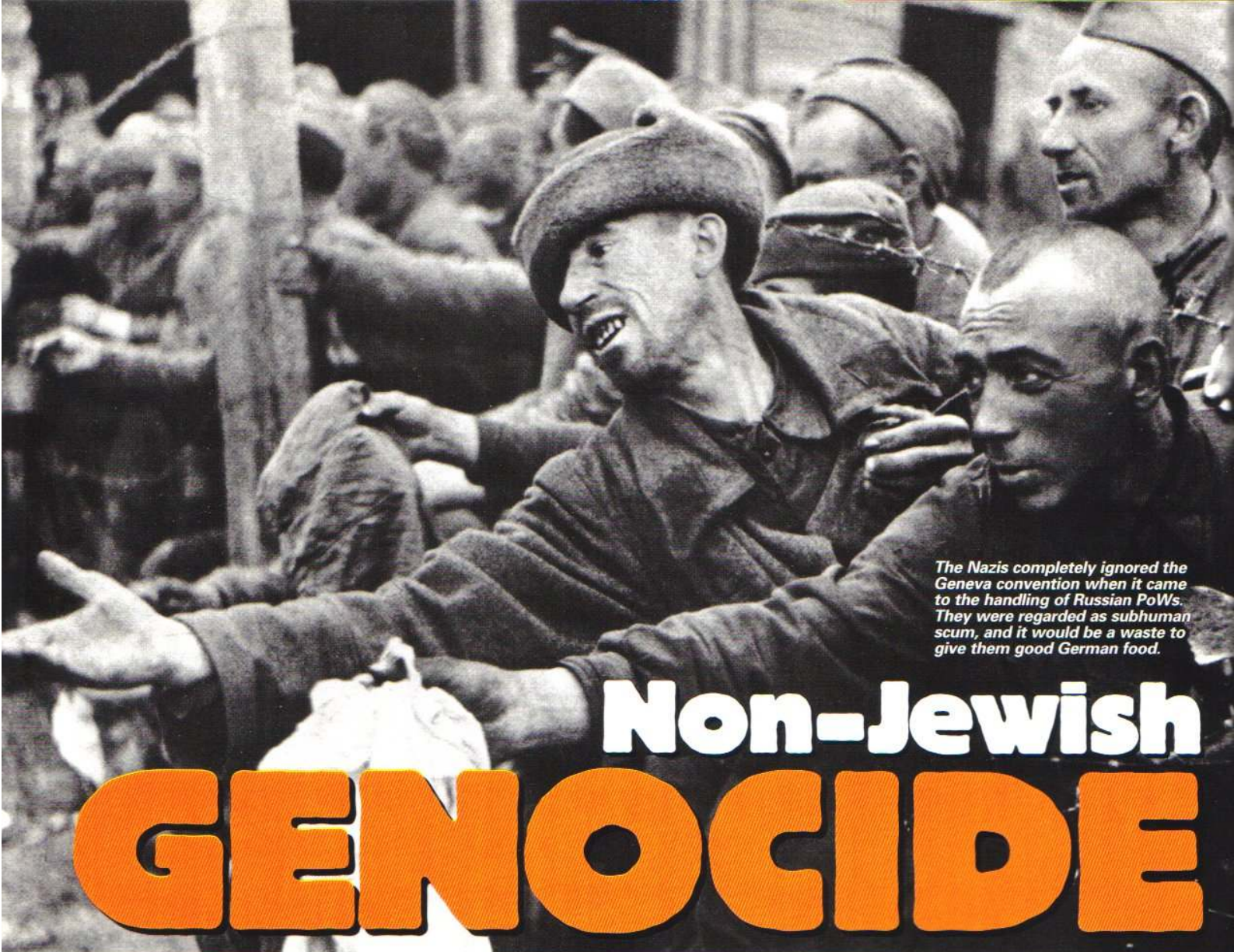
But artists cannot be responsible for the interpretations that crackpots may read into their works. Every mass murderer or assassin can quote some inspiration, be it the voice of God or Oliver Stone. Going down that path inevitably leads to strict censorship. So you can not blame Wagner for the fact that Hitler stole his tunes. Nevertheless the composer's ideas were an outright gift to the executors of the Holocaust.



Above: The Wagner family gave Hitler some measure of emotional security. His own mother died when he was a teenager, and Winifred came to be the source of an unconditional love that Hitler lacked. Here Wagner's grandsons Wolfgang and Wieland take a photograph of ‘Uncle Wolf’.

Below: Richard Wagner's legacy? The madness of belief in racial superiority led straight to the pits of hell that were the extermination camps. Wagner cannot take direct responsibility for Hitler's worst excesses. But it is another thing to ask whether he would have approved.





The Nazis completely ignored the Geneva convention when it came to the handling of Russian PoWs. They were regarded as subhuman scum, and it would be a waste to give them good German food.

Non-Jewish GENOCIDE

It wasn't just the Jews who were scourged by the swastika. The warped Nazi theories of race condemned many ethnic minorities to a brutal death. Sometimes just being different was enough to mark you out.

6 HITLER'S THIRD REICH

GENOCIDE, a policy of extermination directed at a complete race, political or cultural group is normally associated with the Final Solution of the Jewish Problem.

From 1933 the Nazis had either taken European Jews out of society and forced them into ghettos, or ordered them to wear the Star of David if they remained at large. The problem then became what to do with them and the 'final' solution, adopted after the relatively crude operations of the *Einsatzgruppen* in the East, was deportation and extermination.

SWEAR LOYALTY OR DIE

However persecution and extermination was not confined solely to the Jews. It extended to

the Roma (Gypsies), Polish intellectuals, Soviet prisoners of war and non-ethnic groups like homosexuals, Free Masons, European Communists and Jehovah's Witnesses.

In 1933, when Hitler became chancellor, there were 6,034 members of the *Internationale Vereinigung Ernster Bibelforscher IVS* – International Organisation of Serious Bible Researchers, or Jehovah's Witnesses – in Germany. Between 1933 and 1935, over 5,900 were arrested because they refused to be absorbed into the Nazi state in the *Gleichschaltung* programme, and would not take a loyalty oath to the Führer. Declared enemies of the state, more than 2,000 were either executed, worked to death or died of disease and malnutrition in concentration camps.

Despite the fact that several prominent Nazis like SA leader Ernst Röhm were homosexual, German homosexuals became a proscribed group within the Third Reich after 1935, being described as 'asocial, shiftless elements'. Distinguished by a pink triangle on their prison uniforms, they were confined to concentration camps. It is estimated that between 10,000 and 15,000 perished in captivity.

KATYN MASSACRE

Following the defeat of Poland by Germany in 1939, in which they were assisted by the USSR, both countries made considerable efforts to exterminate the Polish political, military and intellectual leadership. The Soviets killed 4,500 captured Polish officers in the woods at Katyn, close to



Above: The race war in the Eastern theatre was escalated by the 'Commissar order', which called for the summary execution of captured Soviet political officers. This picture, taken in the winter of 1941/42, is of a mass grave of 3,000 Soviet dead some 20 km from Leningrad.



Above: Heinrich Himmler was the principle planner and executor of the plan to gain victory for the Aryan race. Himmler was a fanatical believer in the 'race war' myth, and carried out the Nazi programs of genocide on all 'non-aryan' and 'deviant' groups with cold efficiency.

Smolensk. Between 1939 and 1941 they deported almost 1,700,000 Poles to Siberia.

Horrifying though that was, German plans for the Poles were worse. The *Ausserordentliche Befriedungsaktion* – AD Aktion or 'Extraordinary Pacification Action' – was carried out on the orders of the Governor-General Hans Frank, assisted by his deputy Artur Seyss-Inquart. Under their direction between September 1939 and June 1940 2,000 prominent Polish men and women were arrested and executed. The first mass killing took place in Wawer, a town near Warsaw, on 27 December 1939 when 107 men were taken from their homes and shot.

They were the first of about three million Poles who were to die. During the war Poland lost 45% of her doctors, 57% of her

lawyers, 40% of her academics, 30% of her engineers, 185 of her clergy and most of her journalists. The Germans deported approximately 2,000,000 Polish men and women for forced labour in the Reich and for construction work in Occupied France.

RASSENKAMPF

For the first 21 months after Auschwitz was established in May 1940 it served exclusively as a concentration camp for Poles. The first ethnic Pole died at the camp in June 1940. The first Jew to be killed as part of the final solution, when Auschwitz changed its function and became an extermination camp, died in October 1942. Vast numbers of Russian prisoners of war were also housed there, and many were exterminated.

Hitler described Operation Barbarossa, the 1941 invasion of the USSR, as a *Rassenkampf* or 'Race War' between sub-human Slavs and superior Aryans. While genocide might not have been instituted as a formal policy, Russians and Ukrainians died in their millions through abuse, neglect and murder. The killing of hostages, burning of villages that were suspected of sheltering partisans, starvation and the general ravages of war killed 27 million in the Baltic, Belarussia and the Ukraine.

One group was targeted specifically. The *Kommissar Erlass* as issued by Hitler stated that Commissars – *politicheskii rukovoditel*, political officers or *politruks* – attached to the Red Army, "hold views directly opposite to those of National Socialism. Hence these

commissars must be eliminated... when captured in battle or in resistance are on principle to be disposed of by gunshot immediately". Soviet officers were the principle victims of the *Kommissar Erlass*; more than 22,000 were killed in Sachsenhausen and Buchenwald alone.

The survival rate for Soviet soldiers who had surrendered was low. Over half of the more than five million Red Army soldiers taken prisoner by the Germans after June 1941 were dead by 1945.

WAR WITHOUT MERCY

In the first winter of the war, German soldiers took the felt boots, hats and coats of captured or dead Soviet soldiers since they themselves were inadequately dressed. In sub-zero temperatures



Above: Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler visits a Soviet PoW camp in the summer of 1941. He regarded the struggle in the East as a fight to the finish against the inferior Slavic and Jewish 'subhumans'.

Left: In the Spring of 1943 the bodies of 4,363 executed Polish officers were discovered at Katyn Wood. The Soviets claimed that the Germans were responsible for this atrocity. For once the Nazis were blameless – but only because the Russians got there first.

the Russian PoWs were doomed.

In the summer, long columns of prisoners were marched across the dry steppe without water, and many died from dehydration. As a matter of course, those who fell out sick were simply shot.

Those that reached Poland and Germany were housed in 'PoW Work Camps' and used as slave labour in munitions factories, mines and in the construction of the defences of the Atlantic Wall. Worked for long hours, on starvation rations, many died. The PoWs were joined by 2.4 million Soviet citizens who were deported to Germany for forced labour.

Other prisoners died in medical experiments including

freezing and high altitude trials for the Luftwaffe. Soviet prisoners were killed in the first trials of Zyklon B poison gas, at Auschwitz in August 1941.

GYPSY SLAUGHTER

The Roma or Gypsies were the only ethnic group besides the Jews targeted for destruction by the Nazis. Their general fate in Europe, although not as well known as that of the Jews, has a common theme – both races being regarded as pariahs.

From the 15th century large groups of Gypsies migrated into German speaking areas of Europe. Because of their alien appearance, speech and culture, they met with fear and mistrust.

In the ensuing centuries hostility to gypsies was institutionalised. Hundreds of edicts were issued over the years, demonising the nomads as cannibals, kidnappers and poisoners of streams, and a general "plague on the land".

Specific persecution of Roma had begun in Germany long before the Nazis came to power. As late as 1899 a 'Central Office to Combat the Gypsy Nuisance' was founded. By 1926 it had gathered photos and fingerprints on over 14,000 gypsies.

In 1920 they were forbidden to enter parks and public baths; in 1925 a conference on 'The Gypsy Question' was held, which resulted in laws requiring

unemployed Roma to be sent to work camps, "for reasons of public security," and for all Roma to be registered with the police. After 1927 all Roma, even children, had to carry identification cards, with fingerprints and photograph.

THE 'DEVOURING'

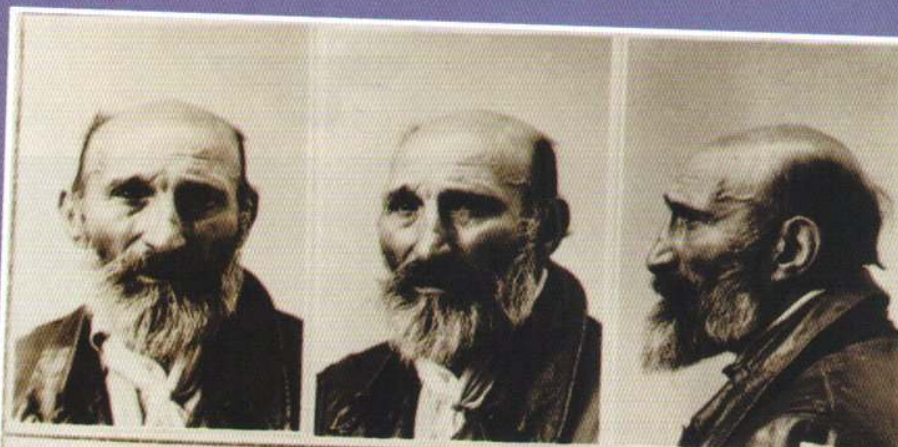
Even harsher persecution followed under the Nazis. 'Gypsy Clean-Up Week' took place throughout Germany between 12–18 June 1938. It was, like *Kristallnacht*, a defining date and marked the beginning of the persecution and extermination of Roma. In the Romani tongue the period is remembered as the *Porrajmos* – 'the Devouring'.

Nazi persecution of the Roma was no new thing. The 'Central Office for the Struggle against Gypsies' had been set up in Munich at the end of the 19th Century. In January 1933, ten days before the Nazis came to power, officials in Burgenland called for the withdrawal of civil rights from the Romani people.

But the Nazis did embellish the persecution with their own racial theories. Backed by dubious scientific research, the gypsies were classified as 'racially inferior'. Their blood was considered so pernicious that even those labelled a quarter or an eighth gypsy were classified as "highly unbalanced, without character, unpredictable and undependable".

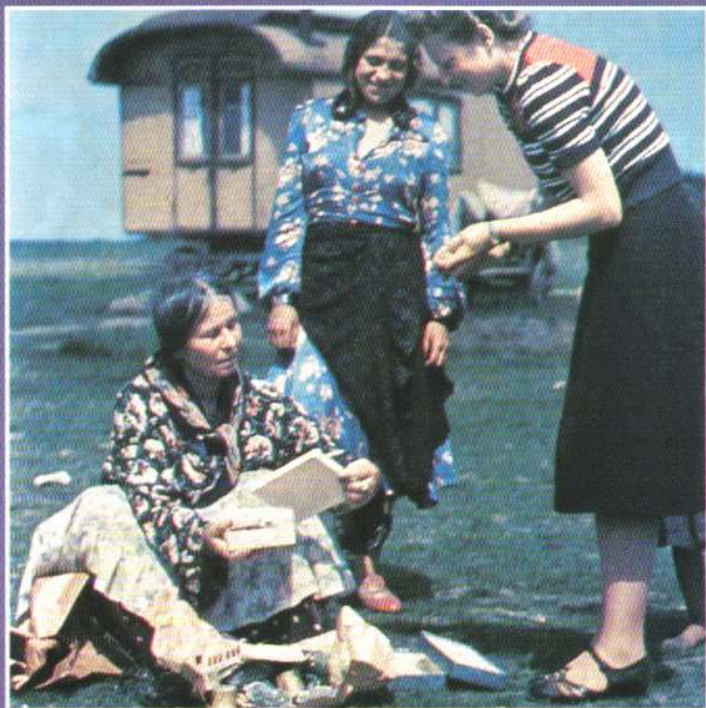
In September 1935 Roma became subject to the the Nuremberg Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honour, which forbade intermarriage between Germans and 'non-Aryans' - specifically Jews, Roma and people of African descent. In 1937 the National Citizenship Law relegated Roma and Jews to second-class citizens.

In that year Heinrich Himmler issued a decree entitled 'The Struggle Against the Gypsy Plague' in which he asserted that Roma of mixed blood were most likely to engage in criminal activity. Thousands of gypsy descendants were tracked down. Some had abandoned their nomadic ways generations before and had been assimilated into the German population. A number were in the Civil Service or Army. In contrast to many Jewish 'mixed breeds' they were driven wholesale into the concentration camps, mostly being assigned to Dachau. To the present day, Gypsy survivors have striven, often unsuccessfully to be recognised as victims of nazi genocide. Old prejudices die hard.

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GYPSIES

AND NAZI RACIAL THEORY



Right: 220,000 gypsies lost their lives under National Socialism. There was no place for them in the Nazi social-Darwinist worldview. Those that did not die in the death camps or in the 'extermination through work' schemes were gunned down in mass executions, like those perpetrated by the Einsatzgruppen in the East.



Above, left and top: Beginning in the 1930s the Research Institute for Racial Hygiene and Population Biology in Berlin-Dahlem, under the leadership of the Tübingen neurologist Robert Ritter, concerned itself with "hereditary research using a breeding population of mixed breed Gypsies and asocial psychopaths". This programme was financed in part by the German Research Foundation, which sent numerous researchers throughout the Greater German Reich to take blood samples and measurements intended to back up conclusions long-since arrived at.





At Buchenwald in January 1940, 250 Romani children died when Zyklon-B was tested on them. From April 1940, under the 'Resettlement Decree', Roma were deported in their thousands to the ghettos of occupied Poland.

Following the attack on the USSR, *Einsatzgruppen* eliminated Roma as well as Jews. According to the executioners Jews were easier to kill because they stood still, "while the Gypsies cry out, howl, and move constantly, even when they are already standing on the shooting ground. Some even jumped into the ditch before the volley and pretended to be dead". When the commander of *Einsatzgruppe D* in the Ukraine, *SS-Brigadeführer* Otto Ohlendorf, was brought to trial after the war, he claimed that a historical precedent existed for killing Roma that dated back to the Thirty Years War.

MENGELE'S BABIES

With the establishment of the extermination camps from December 1942, it became more efficient to transport Roma to Auschwitz and similar camps. As far back as October 1939, Adolf Eichmann had explained that, "The simplest method is to attach some carloads of Gypsies to each transport.

Because these transports must follow schedule, a smooth execution of this matter is expected".

For the camp doctors, Roma were material for spurious medical experiments. They were sterilised in operations and by powerful X-rays. Dr Mengele supervised an operation in which two Roma children were sewn together to create artificial Siamese twins – they died. He collected twins to see if Aryan reproduction could be increased. At Sachsenhausen tests were made to show that Roma blood was inferior to that of Aryans.

At Auschwitz a special Gypsy camp was erected and housed over 20,000 European Roma. It was liquidated on 6 August 1944.

It is hard to place a figure on the number of Roma victims of the Nazis. The best estimates are that 200,000 were killed, but the true figure may be twice as high. Unlike the Jews, the Roma in Bulgaria, Greece, Denmark and Finland were spared. Those in France, Hungary and Poland were rounded up and deported, however, while as many as 90,000



Gypsies might have been slaughtered by the Ustase in Croatia.

Above: German civilians were often witness to sights such as this. Here people of Roma extraction are rounded up and paraded through the town before being loaded up on transports to take them to the death camps.

HOMOSEXUALS

European attitudes towards homosexuality had progressively hardened during the nineteenth century. As in Victorian England, homosexual acts between women were not outlawed, and in some German states before unification they were not forbidden between men. Under the German Empire however

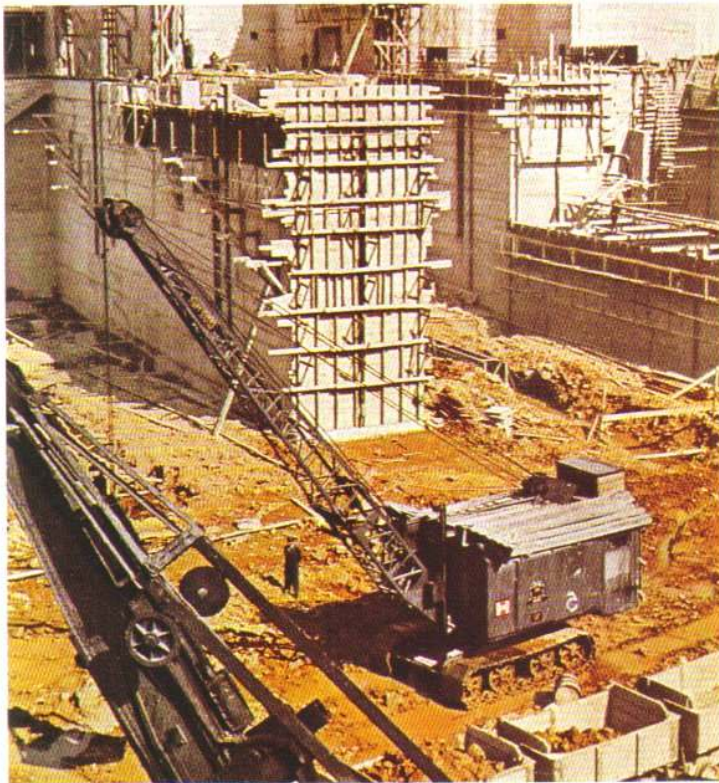
Below: Russian PoW camps were insanitary places. Prisoners driven by thirst were forced to drink contaminated water. Typhus was endemic. Of the 5,400,000 Russian soldiers who were taken captive by the Germans, at least 2,530,000 died or were killed.





Above: Dachau opened on 22 March 1933. Its original inmates were political opponents of the Nazis, but Jews, gypsies, and homosexuals soon joined them. Though not an extermination camp, 31,951 died here.

Below: The outstanding achievements of the German armaments industry during WWII were only possible through the coercion of millions of alien workers and PoWs, many of whom were worked to death.



homosexuality became an imprisonable offence as being "indecent counter to nature". Paragraph 175 of the Reich Criminal Code outlawed those activities that "were similar to intercourse" only.

On 28 June 1935, the Nazis further defined Paragraph 175 so that every indecency between men – even thoughts, if prolonged and intense enough – could be punished with prison terms of up to 10 years, or in severe cases by emasculation.

The Nazis considered homosexuality to be a reversal of the sexual instinct. It undermined the natural will to live because it could endanger the preservation of the *Volks*. Sex researchers who defended the practice were condemned as "pimps in scientific camouflage". Although as "an unnatural emotion" NS physicians considered the condition treatable, in reality homosexual men were sent direct to concentration camps.

In individual tests such as those at Ravensbrueck in 1944, those men who displayed excitement at the attentions of

female prostitutes were released from jail as being "not really homosexual".

As a whole the NS movement was split over its reaction to homosexual practice. Although officially condemned, it was internally tolerated. It was widespread in the SA and *Frei Korps*. Ernst Röhm, although nominated to lead the SA, made no attempt to disguise his sexuality. But the Nazi crusade against homosexuality following Röhm's overthrow was only carried through half-heartedly, and especially during the sensuously deprived times of war, homosexual relations were often quietly tolerated.

THE OUTSIDERS

The Roma, Poles, Slavs, homosexuals, Masons and Jehovah's Witnesses were outsiders in the new Germany being created by the Nazis. Like other non-conformists through history, there was to be no *Lebensraum* for them. Their deaths were therefore considered to be either desirable or of no consequence.



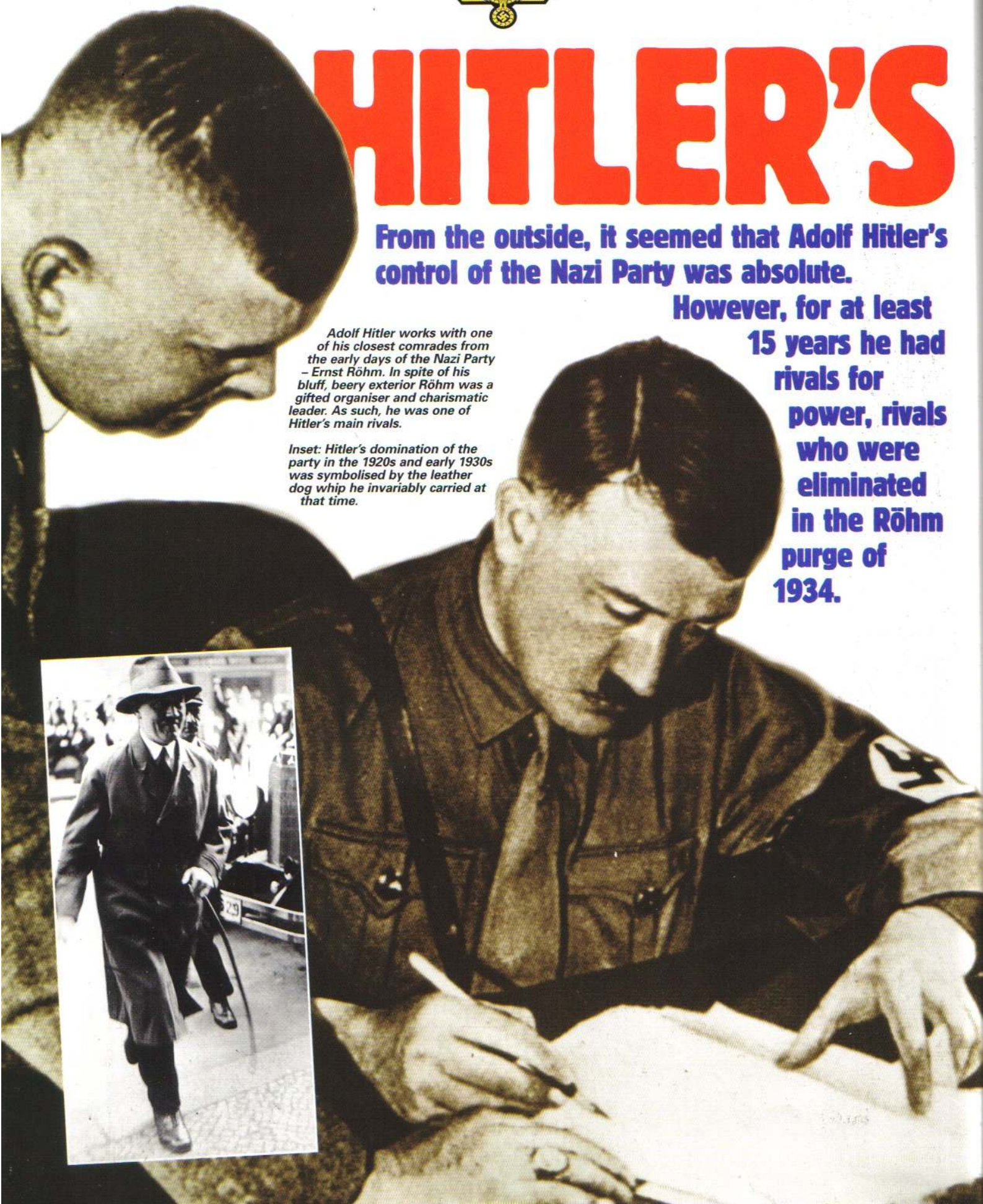
HITLER'S

From the outside, it seemed that Adolf Hitler's control of the Nazi Party was absolute.

However, for at least 15 years he had rivals for power, rivals who were eliminated in the Röhm purge of 1934.

Adolf Hitler works with one of his closest comrades from the early days of the Nazi Party – Ernst Röhm. In spite of his bluff, beery exterior Röhm was a gifted organiser and charismatic leader. As such, he was one of Hitler's main rivals.

Inset: Hitler's domination of the party in the 1920s and early 1930s was symbolised by the leather dog whip he invariably carried at that time.





RIVALS

Right: In the early days, Hitler seemed a shabby figure next to nationalist leaders like Erich Ludendorff. The World War I general was one of the few to see Hitler's potential – and the threat he posed.

Below: Hitler campaigns for the Presidency in 1932. His refusal to join a coalition Government alienated many of his supporters.



OUR PROGRAMME can be summed up in two words: 'Adolf Hitler'! So proclaimed the North German Nazi leadership during the late 1920s. Since his release from Landsberg prison in 1924, Hitler had encouraged a personality cult which soon found the most slavish adherents. He demanded an end to leadership by committee: he would lead the party, unfettered by any constitutional mechanisms, for a period of one year. After that, he would submit his record for approval. Absolute power: Hitler knew no other kind.

Attempts to disagree, to impose some limits on his control were beaten off one after another. In 1928 Artur Dinter

was sacked from his post of *Gauleiter* of Thuringia after accusing Hitler of being a tool of the Catholic Church – Dinter sought a religious reformation via the Nazi revolution. Dinter advocated a party senate that could oversee the leader's activities, but he was jeered out of a party meeting and expelled.

To class the founders of the other *Volksisch* parties as Hitler's enemies would be to exaggerate. The right-wing organisations absorbed by the NSDAP along the road to power went willingly. Their membership recognised that Hitler towered above their own leaders, none representing a serious threat to Hitler's domination of the movement.

The only significant enemy from the earliest days was former Quarter-Master General Erich

von Ludendorff, who became disenchanted with the NSDAP after the failed putsch. But Ludendorff was going mad, fulminating about conspiracies of freemasons, Jews, and communists that were extreme even by the standards of inter-war Germany.

LUDENDORFF SIDELINED

Hitler out-thought him, persuading him to stand in the presidential election that followed the death of Ebert in 1925. As Hitler anticipated, the result was a humiliation: Ludendorff won only one per cent of the vote and retreated from real politics into a twilight world of fantasy and spiritualism. He died in 1937.

Slowly, but surely, the message and the leader became

one and the same. From Hitler's perspective, the lack of a detailed manifesto served two purposes. Firstly, it did not tie him down to policies that might alienate one sector of society just as it pleased another. Secondly, it focused attention on him rather than on a conventional political platform.

While this suited Hitler, there were two very different wings of the Nazi movement that resisted the personality cult – the true revolutionaries and the brawling Brownshirts of the SA. Neither could bring themselves to break with him until it was too late. The consequences were fatal.

The Nazi Party's full title was *Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei* – National Socialist German Workers Party. Hitler cared nothing for socialism or the workers of course, but one



Above: Hitler visits the regional party office in the Ruhr in 1926. Regional leaders were unhappy with directives coming from Munich, but by these personal visits Hitler managed to convert initially hostile Nazis like the young Joseph Goebbels.

man who did was Otto Strasser. He joined the Nazis in 1925 at the age of 28 – another ‘angry young man’ of post-war Germany. His older brother Gregor had started a newspaper in 1924, the *Berliner Arbeiter Zeitung* (Berlin Workers’ Paper) which combined revanchist foreign policy views with support for trades unions and a marked sympathy to Bolshevik Russia. Both brothers worked hard for Hitler during the late 1920s, but Otto broke with the Führer in 1930. He continued to support the workers against the factory bosses that Hitler was now courting. He was expelled from the party and went into exile, ostracised even by his brother.

Gregor Strasser continued to work for Hitler, expanding the party from his stronghold in Berlin (where he recruited Joseph Goebbels) and managing to appeal both to the urban middle classes and the peasantry. In 1932 Hitler recognised his services and appointed him *Reichsorganisationsleiter* (Reich organisation leader) of the Party. He was widely regarded – certainly by himself – as Hitler’s number two.

Strasser had already clashed

with Hitler over policy: like his brother, he still believed in a more socialist vision. But Hitler had won the argument and the Party retained the 25 point programme hashed out in 1920.

By late 1932 the Party membership rolls were falling, morale was low and there were rumblings of discontent about Hitler’s ‘all or nothing’ policy. By refusing to join a coalition, to share power with other parties in a national government, Hitler was following his instinct, gambling that supreme power would eventually be his. He claimed to have the assurance of a sleepwalker, but the ‘inevitability’ of his rise to power was not so evident to his contemporaries and with the advantage of hindsight, seems even less convincing today.

PARTY OPPOSITION

Many Nazis felt that Hitler was letting them down by refusing to join a coalition, that he was throwing away the party’s greatest opportunity to win power and start the revolution. With 230 Reichstag deputies, the Nazis were the biggest party, but needed parliamentary allies to form a majority. Why wait until another election, which might not go their way anyway?

Strasser’s divergence from Hitler’s path was detected early by Joseph Goebbels, who changed allegiance to become a passionate Hitler loyalist. Their

differences were publicly aired in what became a newspaper war between Goebbels’ *Der Angriff* and Strasser’s *Berliner Arbeiter Zeitung*.

On 3 December 1932 Chancellor Kurt von Schleicher invited Strasser to a secret meeting. If Hitler was still determined to remain in opposition, would Strasser like to join the government as Vice Chancellor and Minister President of Prussia, bringing his faction of the Nazi Party with him?

It could have been a decisive turning point in history: had Strasser defected with a breakaway group, the Nazi party might well have disintegrated. Two days later Strasser had a violent argument with Hitler, who accused him of treachery. Strasser claimed he was trying to save the party.

STRASSER RESIGNS

In the event, Strasser could not tear himself from Hitler’s influence. He was browbeaten into resigning and took a long holiday in Italy with his family. His political career was over and the faithful Rudolf Hess was appointed to run the Party’s new central commission.

Strasser was a contradictory character: he revelled in street brawls with the communists and

was happy in the beery company of the SA. Yet he read Homer in the original. His political outlook was every bit as racist as Hitler’s, his pronouncements on economics were, if anything, even more cranky than his Führer’s. The two men differed not on ideology but on tactics. With his removal, the NSDAP was nothing but the party of the leader.

OTTO’S OPPOSITION

Gregor Strasser stayed out of politics when he returned to Germany, unlike his brother who tried to set up a renegade Nazi organisation called *Schwarze Front* from the safety of Prague. It fizzled out and Otto wisely withdrew to Canada out of Hitler’s reach. During the war he fed US intelligence with a stream of gossip and innuendo about Hitler’s personality from which many of the salacious stories of Hitler’s personal life originate. He did not return to Germany until 1955 and lived until 1974, 40 years longer than his brother.

Gregor’s retirement from the political stage did not save him

Below: Erich Ludendorff and Hermann Goering attend a memorial service for fallen Freikorps members just before the 1923 Putsch. Hitler’s imprisonment after the abortive revolt left a vacuum at the head of the party.





Nazi Revolutionaries



Above: Hitler, with Gregor Strasser behind, attends the 1927 Party Day after his ban from political activity had been lifted. During his enforced absence, Strasser had gained power within the NSDAP, and a large section of the party looked to him for leadership.

Left: Gregor Strasser was one of the few people who threatened Hitler's rule of the Nazi party. A good public speaker and a talented organiser, he built up a following which Hitler and his allies could not ignore.



THE ROOTS of the struggle for the leadership of the Nazi Party can be found in its earliest days. The NSDAP attracted members with a wide variety of backgrounds: embittered ex-soldiers, former Freikorps members, right-wing nationalists, *volkisch* mystics, anti-semitic racists, the unemployed and skilled workers who feared unemployment.

As the party grew, it grew in several directions, but these gradually settled down into three main divisions. Hitler wanted a party absolutely obedient to his orders, which would bring him to power. Much of the SA wanted its turn at the top of the heap, replacing the bosses, landowners and generals who ruled German society. And a revolutionary wing of the party, the part which genuinely believed in the 'Socialist' element in the NSDAP's title, wanted to create a new kind of society not so very different from the marxist model.

Gregor Strasser was the leader of the socialists. A pharmacist and businessman, Strasser had been vital to the survival of the Party after the disaster of the Munich putsch. A decorated WWI artilleryman and a Freikorps storm detachment leader, he reluctantly stepped into the leadership while Hitler was banned from political activity.

Above: A meeting of the top Nazi leadership on 30 August 1928. Next to Hitler sits Gregor Strasser, with Heinrich Himmler to his left. Himmler had been Strasser's adjutant in the Epp Freikorps, but by now he was firmly a member of the Führer's wing of the party.

Strasser and his brother Otto moved to Berlin, where they established a large following for their brand of National Socialism in northern Germany.

The Strasser brothers began to diverge from Hitler's line in the late 1920s. In 1930, Otto published a critique of Hitler's policy of winning support from the bankers, landowners and industrialists. Hitler called Otto a "parlour bolshevik," and ordered Goebbels, as Gauleiter of Berlin, to expel the revolutionaries. Otto fled to Prague where he organised opposition to Hitler, and then moved to Switzerland and then on to Canada.

Gregor remained in Germany as a party member, but when in 1932 Schleicher invited him to be vice-chancellor in the government he was forming, Hitler and Goering united to force Strasser from all party offices.

Gregor abandoned politics for business, but Hitler had not forgotten his opposition. He was shot in the back during the Röhm purge in 1934 – though the death was reported as suicide.



Inset above: The defendants at the trial of the Munich putsch leaders. Hitler is flanked by two of his most serious rivals, Erich von Ludendorff and Captain Ernst Röhm. Both would be outmanoeuvred in the struggle for control of the German nationalist movement.

Main picture: By 1932, Hitler had outward control of the party. However, three out of the five senior Nazi leaders in this photo were to fall out with the Führer – fatally. SA leaders Edmund Heines (left) and Ernst Röhm (second from right) were murdered in June 1934 – Heines being shot while in bed with his boyfriend and Röhm was killed in his cell the next day. Wolf Heinrich Count von Helldorf (right) was an SA supporter of Hitler, who was rewarded for that support by being made head of the Berlin police. He was involved in the 1944 bomb plot, and executed.

Inset above: Ernst Röhm with the principle agent of his downfall, Heinrich Himmler. The Röhm purge was caused by a scheme fabricated by Himmler, Heydrich and Goering, which turned SA muttering about a second revolution into a plot to overthrow the Führer.

from Hitler's wrath and he was arrested and murdered during the 'Night of the Long Knives'.

Gregor was an opportunity target, one of many 'loose ends' tied up when Hitler decapitated the SA. The relationship between the Party and the SA had been uneasy even before Hitler came to power. There was little love lost between the beer hall thugs and ineffectual ideologues like Rosenberg or sinister schemers like Heydrich and Himmler. In 1931 the Berlin SA had mutinied over Hitler's order to stop its escalating campaign of street violence which was politically counter-productive. SA leader Walther Stennes refused to

comply and his men smashed up Party offices in the capital. Expelled, he later joined Otto Strasser's splinter group in Prague and eventually escaped to China, leading Chiang Kai-shek's bodyguard.

OPPOSITION IN THE SA

Ernst Röhm had fallen out with Hitler earlier. While Hitler was in prison, he defied the Führer's orders and allied the SA to other right-wing paramilitaries, creating a new organisation, the *Frontbann*. Hitler feared losing control over the SA: Röhm saw himself as the champion of the front-line soldiers betrayed in 1918, the embodiment of the

nihilist *Freikorps* spirit.

Disenchanted, he left Germany to become a mercenary in South America but was soon invited back: his organisational skill was unquestionable. But a year after Hitler became Chancellor, the revolution seemed no nearer.

What Röhm and his cohorts really believed in is difficult to fathom. They were an embittered generation that had seen countless comrades die in a war that won them nothing. They wanted power and had believed Hitler – once an ordinary soldier too – was the man to get it for them. Röhm and the SA leadership began to talk of initiating the full

revolution themselves: a 'brown flood that would submerge the grey (i.e. party) rocks', making no further compromise with industrialists, bankers, the church or the officer class. But Hitler struck first, conducting a swift and merciless purge.

Hitler would face other enemies within Germany over the next ten years, but it was a small element within the army, not the Party, that posed the most serious threat. After the massacre of the SA leaders, the NSDAP's political significance was diminished. Membership was a route to personal advancement. In time, it became more an agent of control than a political party.



Above: Joseph Goebbels, as Gauleiter of Berlin, precipitated the crisis within the SA when he insisted that it came under party control. Goebbels called in the police to control the SA revolts which erupted in 1930 and in 1931, but from then on the brown-shirted Stormtroopers began to be seen as a liability.

Left: The SA had been vital in the early days of the party. Their primary function had been provide the image of disciplined organisation on parade, and to trade hard knocks with political opponents where necessary.

Stormtrooper Rebellion

OPPPOSITION to Hitler's rule within the SA took a more open form than that taken by the socialist wing of the party. The storm trooper organisation grew rapidly in the late 1920s, drawing its strength from those made unemployed by the depression. This coincided with the first large-scale NSDAP election success, and the SA felt that it was due to their activity on the streets. However, Hitler was moving the party away from street violence and towards a more constitutional seizure of power, and he refused to agree to the Stormtrooper demands for more say in running the party.

Opposition to the party was particularly strong in Berlin, where a radical group under Walter Stennes demanded that the SA be made independent of the control of the local Gauleiter, Joseph Goebbels. As the elections of September 1930 approached, the SA men went on

strike, attacking the party offices and the local SS. Hitler, seeing the danger to the party's political gains, gave in to Stennes' demands. However, he removed the national SA chief Pfeffer von Saloman and brought Ernst Röhm back from Bolivia to take control.

When in 1931 Stennes refused to take orders from Röhm, he was dismissed from the party. Stennes immediately called for support and gained it from local SA members all over eastern Germany. It took weeks and police assistance for the SA leadership to regain control.

Even with Röhm in charge, the SA remained unhappy. By 1934 it had grown to be four million strong, and its activities threatened the fragile deal that Hitler had made with the Army and industry. To guarantee his power, Hitler purged the SA in June 1934, arresting and executing its top leadership – including his old friend, Ernst Röhm.

Below: After the Nazis came to power, the Stormtroopers seemed to spin out of control. In the summer of 1933 the SA initiated a wave of terror in which its members – mostly the unemployed, with a sprinkling of criminals – took revenge on their political and ideological enemies.

Below: The primary function of the SA had been to get the NSDAP to power. That achieved, it had become an embarrassment. When the Brownshirts began calling for a second revolution to get them the power they felt they deserved, Hitler decided to use the SS to put them down.





Wir dulden keine Sabotage
am Aufbauwerk des Führers



EUROPEAN

Nazi anti-semitism did not appear like a bolt from a clear blue sky. So-called European civilisation has persecuted and hounded the demonised 'Wandering Jew' for more than fifteen hundred years.

FROM HIS EARLIEST speeches to beerhall rowdies in Bavaria, to his presidential election campaign in 1932, Hitler pledged his determination to make Germany 'Jew free'. His venomous rhetoric, peppered with hideous imagery, presented the German *Volk* as victims of Jewish domination. The Jews were the arch capitalists: bankers who denied credit to struggling small businesses, or corporate monsters who competed unfairly, driving honest men out of work. They

were part of an international conspiracy that involved every Jew from the tailor next door to the Rothschilds.

A neutral observer – or a modern-day reader – could be forgiven for assuming that Jews exercised great power within Germany, if not quite the stranglehold that Hitler claimed. In fact, they comprised less than two per cent of the population and their choice of occupation had long been circumscribed both by tradition and legislation. Many had been assimilated into the German mainstream for

generations, and considered themselves Germans rather than Jews. Some had converted to Christianity. The same was true throughout Western Europe.

JEW IN THE EAST

In Hitler's formative years, the bulk of the European Jewish population lived in Eastern Europe. There, the shadow of death was never far away and the threat of violence led large numbers of Jews to emigrate to America. Anti-semitism in the west was just as prevalent, especially among the ruling

classes, but whereas Jews in France might suffer social exclusion, in Tsarist Russia they were the target of mob violence – pogroms – tacitly endorsed by the authorities. In the Kaiser's Germany Jews might face snobbery, but never a lynching.

Medieval Europe had witnessed wholesale massacres of Jewish people, inspired by the same Crusading zeal that led to the conquest of Palestine from its Muslim rulers and the establishment of the Kingdom of Jerusalem. Jews came to England in the wake of the Norman



JEWRY

Above: The Jewish ghetto in Cracow, Poland at the turn of the century. The practice of segregating Jewish urban populations into ghettos began in the Middle Ages.

Opposite: Stuttgart 1933. With the Nazis in power, the brown-shirted bigots of the SA were freed to attack minorities and the Jews without fear of retribution.

conquest and received royal protection. Christians then, like strict Muslims today, were forbidden to practice usury – moneylending for interest – so Jews played a key role in financing royal treasuries.

THE PRICE OF USURY

With a largely fixed income, kings struggled to pay the heavy costs of war. Borrowing from the Jewish money-lenders enabled them to finance castle building and the hire of mercenaries. They also taxed the money lenders on their profits.

Some monarchs made bad debtors and reacted savagely when their credit dried up. In England, King John had his Jewish bankers arrested when they refused to lend him any

more: he ordered that their teeth be pulled out at a rate of one per day until they found him more money. He got his gold.

Ordinary people could be even more brutal. After a local dispute in York in March 1190, the city's Jews were set upon by a mob and fled to take sanctuary in the castle. Not trusting the constable, they refused him entry. He, the sheriff and the townsfolk laid siege to the castle. When they were poised to storm the place, the Jews committed mass suicide. A few slipped away, only to be caught and killed by their Christian neighbours.

Some English towns, like Winchester, still have a Jewry street, but there were no Jews living there after the 13th century. The statute *De Judaismo*

was introduced in 1275. Intended to regulate usury, it was a prelude to the expulsion of all Jews. This was ordered by King Edward I in 1290, although anticipated by some noblemen like Simon de Montfort who threw out all Jews in his earldom of Leicester. Jews were not allowed to return to England until Cromwell repealed the law in 1655.

CHRISTIAN OPPRESSION

The belief that all men must worship the same god – and in the same way – led Christians to persecute Jews from the middle ages until the 17th century. Jews living in Spain were compelled to renounce their religion, or meet a grisly end at the hands of the Inquisition.

Jews often received better

treatment in the lands of the Ottoman Empire where, like all resident non-Muslims, they were excused military service but had to pay a fine.

There was no respite when the Christian church was split asunder by the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century. Martin Luther – one of Adolf Hitler's 'Great Germans' – might have championed religious freedom against the Papacy, but he was implacably hostile to Jews. The religious wars triggered by Reformation culminated in the Thirty Years War (1618-48) which featured the last outright pogroms in Western Europe.

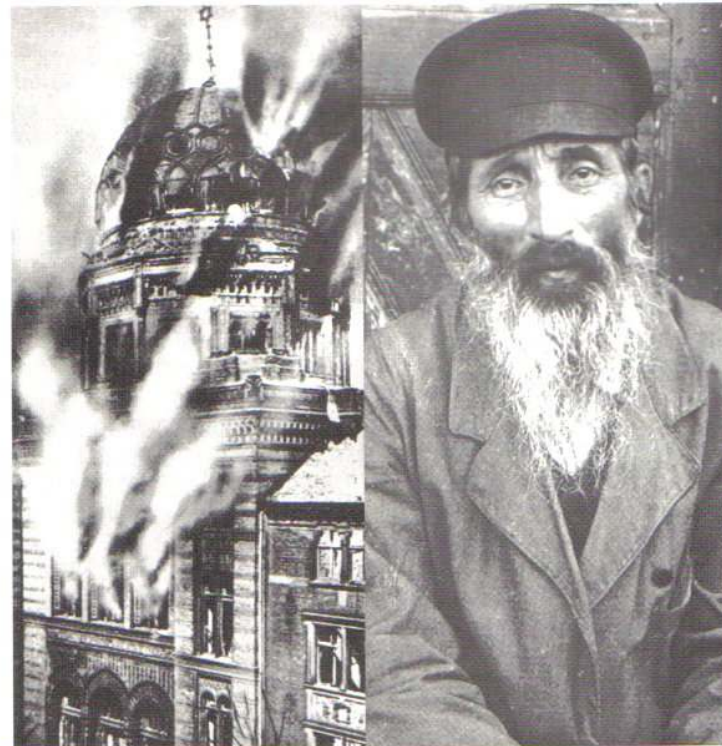
More tolerant attitudes eventually prevailed. When Hitler's father presided over his



Above: La rue des Rosiers in the Parisian Jewish quarter in the 1920s. Even in the enlightened democracies, two thousand years of Christian persecution meant that Jews were still, to some extent, pariahs.

Below: Long since closed as a place of worship, the imposing Berlin synagogue in Oranienburgerstrasse burns after an Allied air raid on 26 November 1943.

Below: A resigned and knowing stare from eyes that have borne suffering with patience. The Jews in Lodz were to be annihilated within a generation of this photograph being taken.



customs post, Benjamin Disraeli was the British Prime Minister. The acceptance of Jewish people into western European society was all but complete.

VIENNESE BACILLUS

Hitler claimed to have experienced a revelation in Vienna: that the Jews were the bacillus that threatened the health of the German nation. The Austrian capital lay on the frontier between West and East. Jews had been banished from some of the Hapsburg lands since the middle ages; the restriction was still in force in Linz when Hitler's father was born – a fact which was overlooked by Hans Frank when investigating the rumour that Hitler's grandfather might have been Jewish.

But Vienna had a high Jewish population which included large numbers of Yiddish-speakers, whose language and distinctive clothes made them highly conspicuous to Hitler, the provincial Austrian.

By the early 20th century, the majority of the Jewish population in Europe lived in the Russian Empire, which included Poland and the Baltic States. The Tsarist regime had an internal passport system to regulate its peoples; Jews were restricted to various provinces and cities and were concentrated in Poland.

Legal discrimination was far harsher than in the West where the arrest – on trumped up charges of espionage – of Captain Dreyfus, a Jewish officer in the French army led to a furore. Dreyfus was imprisoned on Devil's Island, to the delight of the anti-Semitic establishment, but he had equally vociferous champions in France's liberal press, and was eventually freed.

REVOLUTIONARIES

The affair exposed an ugly undercurrent in French politics, but in Russia Tsar Nicholas II resorted to blaming the Jews for revolutionary outrages that cost him the occasional relative or prime minister. His militia connived at a series of medieval-

style pogroms complete with mass rapes and killings. Western Europe reacted in horror at such barbarity; Russia's international credit rating plunged.

The disintegration of the Tsarist regime plunged Russia into civil war. Lenin and the Bolshevik Party were determined to extend their grip on the whole Empire; their 1917 'revolution' amounted to little more than a coup d'état in the capital. Around the fringes of the Tsarist lands, so-called 'White' armies of monarchists, Cossacks and nationalists challenged the Reds – and each other. As the Tsar had observed (and Hitler noted) many of the leading Bolsheviks were Jews. It was but a short step to the idea that most Jews were Bolsheviks.

SLAUGHTER IN KIEV

The Jews of Kiev were subject to systematic slaughter by a Cossack army compelled to withdraw by the advance of the Red Cavalry. With no central government to speak of, many areas of Russia descended into barbarous anarchy and the Jews were often victimised by their former neighbours as much as marauding Red or White soldiers.

The war photographer Yevgheny Khaldei (who took the famous picture of the victorious Russian soldiers planting the Red Flag on the roof of the Reichstag in 1945) was orphaned as a baby when a Ukrainian mob shot his mother. The bullet passed through him to kill her. His father was beaten to death in another anti-Jewish riot a few years later.

Hitler's rise to power stimulated anti-Semitic movements across Europe. Romania, Hungary, Poland, Britain and the USA had Fascist parties spouting racist propaganda. Curiously, only a small minority of Mussolini's Fascists displayed the same obsession with anti-Semitism.

When Germany invaded the USSR, anti-Semitic mobs ran riot in the Baltic States, a rampage of 'ethnic cleansing' that was in full swing before the SS death squads

"J'ACCUSE"



JEWISH-CHRISTIAN relations in the 19th century, strained at best, often erupted into open conflict. Established Christianity, and Roman Catholicism in particular, were staunch advocates of the Old Order. They identified Jews as the major beneficiaries of the French Revolution. Jews presented a liberal, secular and anti-clerical often revolutionary threat to the status quo. As a result, in France Clerical anti-Semitism became allied to the anti-Semitism of the traditional right.

The Dreyfus affair in *fin de siècle* France was the ground upon which these simmering tensions boiled over. In 1894 a military tribunal convicted Capt Alfred Dreyfus, the only Jewish officer in the French General Staff, of pro-German espionage. Even after Dreyfus's conviction, secrets continued to be leaked and the Chief of Army Intelligence, Colonel

Georges Picquart, eventually concluded that a Major Esterhazy and not Dreyfus was guilty. At the ensuing courts martial, Esterhazy was acquitted and Picquart arrested.

By this time France had split into two opposing groups. The anti-Dreyfusards, nationalist and authoritarian, viewed the controversy as an attempt by the nation's enemies to discredit the army, and saw it as a case of national security against international socialism and Jewry, or of France against Germany. The liberal Dreyfusards sought to champion the freedom of the individual over a military authority acting independently of the State.

Eventually Dreyfus obtained an acquittal, but the blood-letting split France for a generation to come. But in all of this, the Jew was largely overlooked as once again being the scapegoat.

Left: Alfred Dreyfus (1859-1935) at the time of his trial. The 12 year affair was a watershed in the history of the Third Republic. At best, it evoked a passionate repudiation of anti-Semitism; at worst it strengthened the crippling internal divisions within France.

Inset: On 13 January 1898 the novelist Emile Zola wrote an open letter, published on the front page of Georges Clemenceau's paper. In it Zola accuses the army of covering up its mistaken conviction of Dreyfus.

arrived. And when they did, the SS discovered plenty of recruits for their security forces and Waffen-SS divisions. Local militias, formed by 'warlords' not unlike those of the 1990s Balkans were given free rein by the German authorities. In the first week of the year 2000, the British government deported Konrad Kalejs, an alleged member of the *Arajs Kommando*, a Latvian murder squad responsible for killing some 30,000 Jews in 1941-2.

STORY WITHOUT END

The destruction of the Nazi regime did not end the persecution of the Jews in Europe. Stalin, more suspicious and paranoid by the year, initiated a wave of arrests after World War II – a new 'terror' that replenished the Gulag labour camps, bringing the number of prisoners to an estimated 14 million souls. Although Stalin had not previously made public his deep-seated prejudice, he had been furious when his son married a Jew; when he found out his daughter was involved

with a Jew, the unfortunate man was arrested and spent ten years in Siberia.

In 1948 Stalin made a number of statements to the effect that there was a Zionist-American conspiracy against the Soviet Union. He had the director of Moscow's Yiddish theatre killed along with many Yiddish writers; Jewish publications were closed, theatres shut and restrictive quotas placed on the number of Jews admitted to universities. Rank was no protection: Foreign Minister Molotov's Jewish wife was imprisoned in a camp in central Asia and not released until Stalin's death.

Such anti-Semitism has not yet been consigned to history. Posters waved in front of CNN cameras in Moscow in 1999, calling for the overthrow of President Yeltsin, depicted him as a Jew with the Star of David in the background. To the former-communist protestors, his economic policy was the product of Jewish conspiracy. Clearly, the world's collective conscience, so shocked by the Holocaust, suffers from periodic bouts of amnesia.



Above: 'Pogrom' is a Russian word meaning literally devastation. It was initially coined to describe the wave of anti-Jewish atrocities committed in Russia which began with the assassination of Tsar Alexander II in 1881. Although the killer was not a Jew, false rumours aroused Russian mobs in more than 200 cities and towns to attack Jews and destroy their property.



Hans Frank was Hitler's lawyer. An educated bourgeois, he failed to be accepted by the Nazi inner circle – in spite of aping their thuggish methods. Weak and unstable by nature, he was prey to his emotions.

In September 1939, Frank was made civilian administrative chief to the Commander-in-Chief East. A month later he became Governor-General of Poland – a post which would eventually cost him his life.

Hans Frank

HITLER'S ADVOCATE

HANS FRANK was another of the angry young men in black who formed the vanguard of the German right-wing after the First World War – and later, the hard core of the Nazi leadership. Like so many of his future associates, Frank was ready to fight and die for Germany, but the Empire of the Kaiser collapsed in defeat before he could go to the front. He had just turned eighteen when the Imperial armies were beaten.

Frank, the son of a disbarred attorney, returned to Munich where he joined a *Freikorps* formation that took part in the overthrow of the city's short-lived Red Republic. He became a law student and joined the Thule Society, a *völkisch* group founded towards the end of the war. The membership list is virtually a Who's Who of the NSDAP: Rudolf Hess, Alfred Rosenberg, Dietrich Eckart, Gottfried Feder and co-founder of the DAP Karl Harrer.

Drexler's German Workers Party was founded in January 1919. His intention, opposed by some of the well-heeled Thule Society, was to reach out to the lower classes with the *völkisch* message. Hitler was invited to address a meeting the following September. Frank saw Hitler for the first time in January 1920. He was spellbound.

FRANK AND HITLER

Frank described his Damascene conversion: "He placed before the protection of the Almighty, in the most serious and solemn exhortation, the salvation of the honour of the German soldier and worker as his life task... When he finished, the applause would not die down... From this evening onwards, though not a party member, I was convinced that if one man could do it, Hitler alone would be capable of mastering Germany's fate."

Hans Frank joined the German Workers Party and became a Nazi after the DAP was absorbed into the NSDAP.



The young law student was involved in the 1923 Beer Hall Putsch. The morning after Hitler stormed the Bürgerbräukeller and announced his revolutionary government, Frank knew that the coup had failed: as he set up a machine-gun close to the bar a passing worker asked: "Has your mum given you permission to play with such dangerous toys on the street?"

NAZI DEFENDER

Frank married in 1925 and qualified for the bar in 1926. He began a lucrative career, defending SA men accused of assaulting hostile elements at Nazi rallies or engaged in street battles with Communists – there were some 40,000 such trials between 1925 and 1933. Hitler retained Frank as his own attorney and appointed him *Reichsleiter* and head of legal affairs for the NSDAP. He represented Hitler in some 150 defamation lawsuits and it was his personal threats of legal action that helped muzzle the press in the wake of Geli Raubal's death.

Frank was elected to the Reichstag in the Nazi landslide of September 1930. Within weeks he found himself defending three Reichswehr officers charged with conspiring to commit treason – military officers were forbidden to involve themselves with parties committed to changing the Weimar constitution and these men were active Nazis. Frank called Hitler as a witness and Hitler was able to turn the court room into a political platform. It was a key moment: Hitler swore on oath that he would only pursue his ambitions by constitutional means. Many moderates, in sympathy with his aims, but alarmed by the brownshirts, were won over.

HITLER'S ANCESTRY

Frank was tasked with a sensitive mission on Hitler's personal orders: to investigate the Führer's own family for any



Having run the Nazi legal office since 1929 Frank also became head of the powerful Association of National Socialist Jurists. He later asserted that this body was "a genuine fighting organisation against Himmler and Bormann". But that was just self-dramatisation. The rule of Law had no place in Nazi Germany.

Jewish connections. According to Frank, he discovered that Hitler's father was the illegitimate child of Maria Schickelgruber, a cook employed in a Jewish household – a child for which the master of the house paid maintenance. Hitler's reaction to the news was predictably furious. He claimed to have heard it from his grandmother that they had tricked the old Jew into paying up, but as she died before Hitler was born this failed to convince.

However, the intimate secrets of the Frankfurter household

remain a mystery: for one thing there had been no Jews in that part of Austria since their expulsion in 1496. There were none recorded in Graz in the 1830s when this was supposed to have taken place, and certainly no family called Frankfurter. Frank's allegations gained widespread coverage in the 1950s. The information was contained in his memoirs *Facing the Gallows* and should carry some weight as the man's last words. Frank had also undergone a conversion to Roman Catholicism. As such he was

the humble penitent in the shadow of the noose.

During the 1932 election campaign the Social Democratic *Münchener Post* ran an article alleging SA leader Ernst Röhm was gay. Frank was ordered to initiate a libel action, but, having reviewed the evidence, had to tell Hitler that his chief stormtrooper was indeed homosexual. Hitler had in fact operated a 'don't ask, don't tell' policy, which (not for the last time) broke down the moment it was tested. It was one thing to be aware of Röhm's proclivities, but studying the



Above: Governor-General Frank in 1939 with Deputy Seyss-Inquart shortly before the latter took up the governorship of the Netherlands. Frank called his time in Poland his "most terrible years".

Above right: Reichsminister Frank in conversation with Reichsjustizminister Dr Gürtner in June 1938. Frank never fully appreciated Hitler's contempt for the law. The Führer regarded all lawyers as nothing more than "traitors to the nation" and "utter fools".

Below: Frank takes the review stand with his rival Reichsführer Heinrich Himmler. One of the latter's placemen, Obergruppenführer Krüger, carried on an intense power struggle with Frank, until he was surprisingly deposed on Hitler's orders.



sordid details turned Hitler's stomach. The crucial point for Hitler was that Röhm's activities were confined to consenting adults. Frank assured Hitler that there was no evidence of child abuse and Hitler decided to drop the matter, for the moment.

After Hitler won power in 1933, Frank was appointed Justice Minister in Bavaria, where Heinrich Himmler was appointed Police Chief and Heydrich put in charge of the political police. His first act was to ban Jews from entering the legal profession, a measure soon extended across the entire German judicial system. In 1934 Frank became Reichs Minister of Justice, a classic instance of the fusion of Party and State posts that took place under the Nazi regime.

ABOVE THE LAW

Frank soon discovered the limits of his power. On 30 June 1934 he heard that Röhm and the SA leadership had been arrested. He hurried to Munich's Stadelheim prison where he found Röhm begging for his life – or at least for his family to be spared. Frank promised to do what he could and Röhm shook his hands, quoting the martyred French revolutionary Pierre Vergniaud, "The revolution, like Saturn, devours its children".

Frank returned to his office and encountered Sepp Dietrich with the death list in his hand. Frank forbade him to shoot anyone without due process of law, but Dietrich put a telephone call through to Hitler. The Führer screamed at Frank, accusing him of sympathy for the 'scum' and demanding he carry out a direct order. "I am the Reichs Chancellor" Hitler yelled, apparently taking it as read that his office was above the law. Dietrich returned to Stadelheim and shot the prisoners.

KING OF POLAND

After the conquest of Poland in 1939 Hitler merged Polish Silesia with German Silesia; the 'Polish Corridor' was annexed, and Reichsleiter Hans Frank, Reichs Justice Minister was given a third job: Governor of Poland. The rump state he controlled was known as the *General-gouvernement* or General Government.

From the outset he ruled in regal splendour. He considered it an obligation to provide "representation in the name of the Führer and the Reich on the grandest scale possible". So lavish was his lifestyle, that even the ostentatious Goering styled him "King Stanislaus".

Frank's fief included four of



Frankreich



Above and right: Frank had a taste for the high life and was always willing to exploit the wealth of his territories. He commented that power and the use of force without resistance was the sweetest and also the most noxious poison.



the six original extermination camps – Majdanek, Belzec, Treblinka and Sobibor. As he told his cabinet assembled at Krakow: "Gentlemen, I must ask you to rid yourself of pity. We must annihilate the Jews."

German became the official language of the General Government. Frank expropriated art treasures, cash and antiques to sustain his lifestyle. His home in Germany acquired a Leonardo da Vinci and a Rembrandt. His Polish castle was hosted by a succession of young mistresses.

Frank was stripped of his original job and his powers in Poland circumscribed after he fell foul of Heinrich Himmler. The *Reichsführer* was determined

to plant colonies of Germans in Poland, but the arbitrary seizure of land weakened Frank's mini-state. He protested against the colonisation policy but Hitler sided with Himmler.

Frank's fell further from favour after a 1942 series of enthusiastically received speeches made in German universities, in which he called for a return to the constitutional state. Frank was sacked from his Party and judicial posts. He remained as governor of Poland until forced to flee by the arrival of the Red Army in 1945.

Captured, Hans Frank was convicted of crimes against humanity and war crimes. He was hanged on 16 October 1946.



Above: Frank revelling in the pagentry of ceremony, reviews Ukrainian nationals in October 1941. He is flanked by SS and Party men. Himmler regarded Frank as "a traitor to the Fatherland who was hand in glove with the Poles".

ON 26 OCTOBER 1939 Frank was appointed Governor-General of the occupied territory of Poland. The post was tailor-made for his craving for prestige. From the old royal palace in Cracow he ruled with the showy display of an oriental despot. He lived with the extravagant ceremonial so fitting to his nature. He regarded himself "with audacious romanticism as a vassal king set by Hitler over Poland".

He was lord of life and death. His patriarchal rule was based on a number of precepts cobbled together from his eclectic reading of the ways of supermen, the style of a world power and German consciousness of mission.

From the beginning he saw his goal as the re-Germanisation of the land, cleansing it from "alien races that are no longer required". He once wrote: "If I

put up a poster recording all the Poles shot, the forests of Poland would be insufficient for the task".

The subjugated Poland became the model police state, and a high school for the cadres who were to exercise totalitarian rule.

His time in Poland was dogged by a power struggle with the SS who were dedicated to the spoilation of the land. Frank would rule with reason and leniency alternating with trying to outdo the SS by even greater barbarities. He hoped by such acts of terror to win a reputation with Hitler and his cronies for National Socialist ability in dealing with the East.

His famous diary, running to 38 volumes, which he handed over intact in May 1945, records every detail of his quixotic career.

Right and below: At Nuremberg Frank was confronted with the evidence that he had produced. Documents recorded a life which through weakness had led him into destructive extremism. He imagined that he heard "the angry laughter of God" and so converted to Catholicism. The repentance, earnestly manifested, pointed to a real inner conversion. But this volte face may just have been a passing mood, in a character where there was no room for truth. Only the noose produced in Frank a change from which he could not deviate.





Stalingrad

The German Sixth Army had forced its way into Stalingrad expecting a quick victory and another triumph for the Third Reich. But the fighting grew harder and harder as autumn inexorably turned to winter, and what had seemed easy in September turned into a fierce battle for survival.



No battle in history was as significant as Stalingrad. Before the fight for the city on the Volga, the Germans were winning the war. After the battle, their final defeat was inevitable.

IN THE SUMMER OF 1942 it seemed nothing could stop the 6th Army. The largest of the 12 German armies on the eastern front, it broke through the Soviet defences and the Red Army's retreat became a rout. The panic was as bad as anything seen the previous summer. Stalin responded with typically brutal vigour. Order No. 227, known for its key phrase 'Not a step back!' not only imposed the death penalty on men retreating without authorisation, but also called for retribution against their families. A return to Bolshevik-style 'discipline of the revolver' saw more than 13,500 executions carried out by the NKVD before the end of 1942.

Soviet resistance hardened as the 6th Army reached the Volga. Stalin's draconian measures played their part, but there was a genuinely popular spirit of resistance animating the defenders. Soviet soldiers' letters reveal a keen sense that the invaders were now 1500 kilometres inside Russia. If they could not be stopped here, where could they be stopped? And by mid-1942 all Russia knew what German rule meant for people designated 'racial inferiors' by the self-appointed master race. It was time to win or die.

Stalingrad was named after the Soviet dictator to commemorate a Civil War victory credited to his leadership. Stretching for nearly 25 km (15 miles) along the west bank of the Volga, it consisted mainly of wooden houses. However, there were three new manufacturing plants, the Red October steel works, the Barrikady ordnance factory and

the Stalingrad tractor factory. These massive complexes were transformed into fortresses by Red Army engineers and by German bombing.

The fury of the German onslaught disguised the fact that the *Ostheer* was actually weaker than in 1941. There had been few city fights then, as the panzer divisions had by-passed places like Minsk, Kharkov and Kiev. But in 1942 there was little armour to spare for Stalingrad. A large part of the Wehrmacht's panzer strength remained on the central front, to hold down the major Russian forces guarding Moscow. Kleist's 1st Panzer Army was by now nearing the Caspian Sea. The first three SS formations were re-equipping as fully-fledged panzer divisions, but they had been sent to France after the Allied attack on Dieppe was taken to herald a possible cross-Channel assault. As a result, new tanks were in short supply in the East, since the SS had priority. All this meant that when Hitler demanded his army take Stalingrad, it had to be done the hard way, by frontal attack.

SIXTH ARMY ATTACK

Supported by 2,000 guns and 500 tanks, 6th Army smashed into the heart of the city on 13 September. The 71st infantry division reached the river, cutting Stalingrad in two and bringing the crucial landing stages under fire. The Russians now had to run a gauntlet of machine-gun and mortar fire to get reinforcements and supplies into the city – and to extract the endless flow of wounded. 13th Guards division was rushed across from the east bank and suffered 90 per cent losses in a series of counter-



attacks. Stalingrad's railway station was reduced to rubble as it changed hands four times on 14 September.

The Germans were fighting under the umbrella of 1,000 sorties a day flown by VIII *Fleigerkorps*. In face of that German air superiority, the Soviets developed a new tactic – they kept as close to the German front line as possible, making it harder for the Germans to rely on airstrikes.

The 6th Army's commander was summoned to Vinnitsa in the Ukraine on 12 September. At Hitler's field headquarters, known as *Werwolf*, the Führer demanded the immediate fall of the city for 'world historic reasons'. *Generaleutnant* Friederich Paulus had originally estimated that it would take ten

Above: The German attacks of the autumn had reduced the city to rubble, making the attackers' job much harder and that of the defenders much easier. Stalingrad was the ultimate example of the close-quarters, no-holds-barred fighting known as urban combat.

days of hard fighting with a period of re-grouping to follow, and he stuck to his original estimate.

GENERAL PAULUS

Paulus was a brilliant staff officer, formerly Reichenau's chief-of-staff, but this was his first independent command. From the moment he returned to the front, he was subjected to an incessant stream of signals from Hitler. His staff noticed a nervous tic appearing above one eye, and he suffered a recurrence of what German soldiers called 'the Russian sickness' – dysentery.



Above: An infantryman peers warily from his defensive position in a ruined Stalingrad building. The Soviets used such rubble as fortifications, often emerging from by-passed cellars to attack the Germans from behind.

Hitler continued to goad Paulus throughout September and into the following month as the 6th Army pushed painfully through the ruins of the city. The amount of ground taken each day seemed always smaller than the last, and Soviet counter-attacks, especially by night, enabled them to cling to a small bridgehead on the west bank of the river. Tempers flared at Hitler's headquarters. On 24 September Hitler sacked General Franz Halder, chief of the Army General Staff.

TURN OF THE TIDE?

It was at this point, before the Soviet counter-attack, before the blizzards, before the shrinking Axis bridgehead in North Africa was overwhelmed, that Hitler sensed he had lost the war. General Warlimont confided to his diary after a visit to Vinnitsa, 'he has realised his fatal gamble is over, that Soviet Russia

is not going to be beaten in this second attempt.' Hitler had told his generals that if he failed to take the Caucasian oilfields he would have to make peace. By October 1942 it was plain that Army Group A's lunge towards the Caspian had come to a halt. Attrition of men and vehicles had been heavy and the panzer divisions had outrun their supply lines. But worse was to come – winter was only weeks away.

Hitler did not make peace. Instead he focused more and more on that city by the Volga, named after his greatest enemy. Previously, he had ordered the 6th Army to occupy enough of the bank to stop river traffic. Now he demanded total conquest of Stalingrad.

By coincidence, Soviet generals Rokossovsky and Zhukov were in Moscow on the same day that Paulus flew to meet Hitler. They presented Stalin with an ambitious plan. The 6th



Above: Stalingrad was a key industrial city, but it sprawled for tens of kilometers along the west bank of the Volga. Occupying the city proved to be much harder than the German high command had anticipated.



Above: German armour had proved decisive in the sweeping advance through the Russian steppes, but once bogged down in the ruins of Stalingrad the panzers proved vulnerable to determined attacks by defending infantrymen.

Army's front ran for about 200 km (130 miles), from just south of the city, north west across the Don bends, to the Volga north of Rynok. Paulus had eight divisions inside Stalingrad, 11 manning the front and a single one in reserve.

THE SOVIET PLAN

Zhukov intended to attack the German front line either side of Stalingrad, cutting off the forces fighting for the city. By feeding in just enough replacements to sustain resistance in Stalingrad itself, the Soviets planned to hold the 6th Army in place while they assembled their best formations opposite Paulus' flanks. Since these were held by Romanian, Hungarian and Italian units, they lacked the weaponry or skill to deal with a massed tank attack.

Even as Paulus launched his final all-out effort to take the last sectors still in Soviet hands, German intelligence identified a threat to 6th Army's left flank.

As nine of his depleted divisions attacked the familiar ruins of the Red October factory on 11 November, 48th Panzer Corps was ordered to move behind the line of the Don. A corps in name only, it could call on one German panzer division with just 45 tanks and a Romanian armoured division with a similar quantity of obsolete vehicles. The 6th Army held 90 per cent of Stalingrad, but would never occupy the whole city.

For those German and allied divisions out on the bare steppe, the Stalingrad campaign was reminiscent of World War I. They remained in their trenches, exchanging the occasional artillery bombardment with the Russians. Aircraft sometimes joined in, but the majority were assigned to the fight for the city. Most of the German and all of the allied formations relied on horse transport; the Italians and Romanians had field guns dating

Sixth Army Attacks

IN SEPTEMBER 1942 General Friederich Paulus finally launched the Sixth Army's main attempt to capture Stalingrad.

But the time for taking the city by coup de main had passed. Hitler's diversion of Hoth's 4th Panzer Army to the Caucasus had delayed the drive on the Volga, and even when ordered to turn back the Panzers had to fight their way through stiffening Soviet resistance.

TOO LATE

Von Paulus's makeshift attack could only have succeeded if it met an enemy that was not only beaten but whose morale was extremely low. The delay had given the Soviets time to reinforce the city. From the very first engagements it was clear to the Germans that the Russians had recovered beyond anyone's expectations, and that the Russian slogan "The Volga has only one bank" was no empty boast.

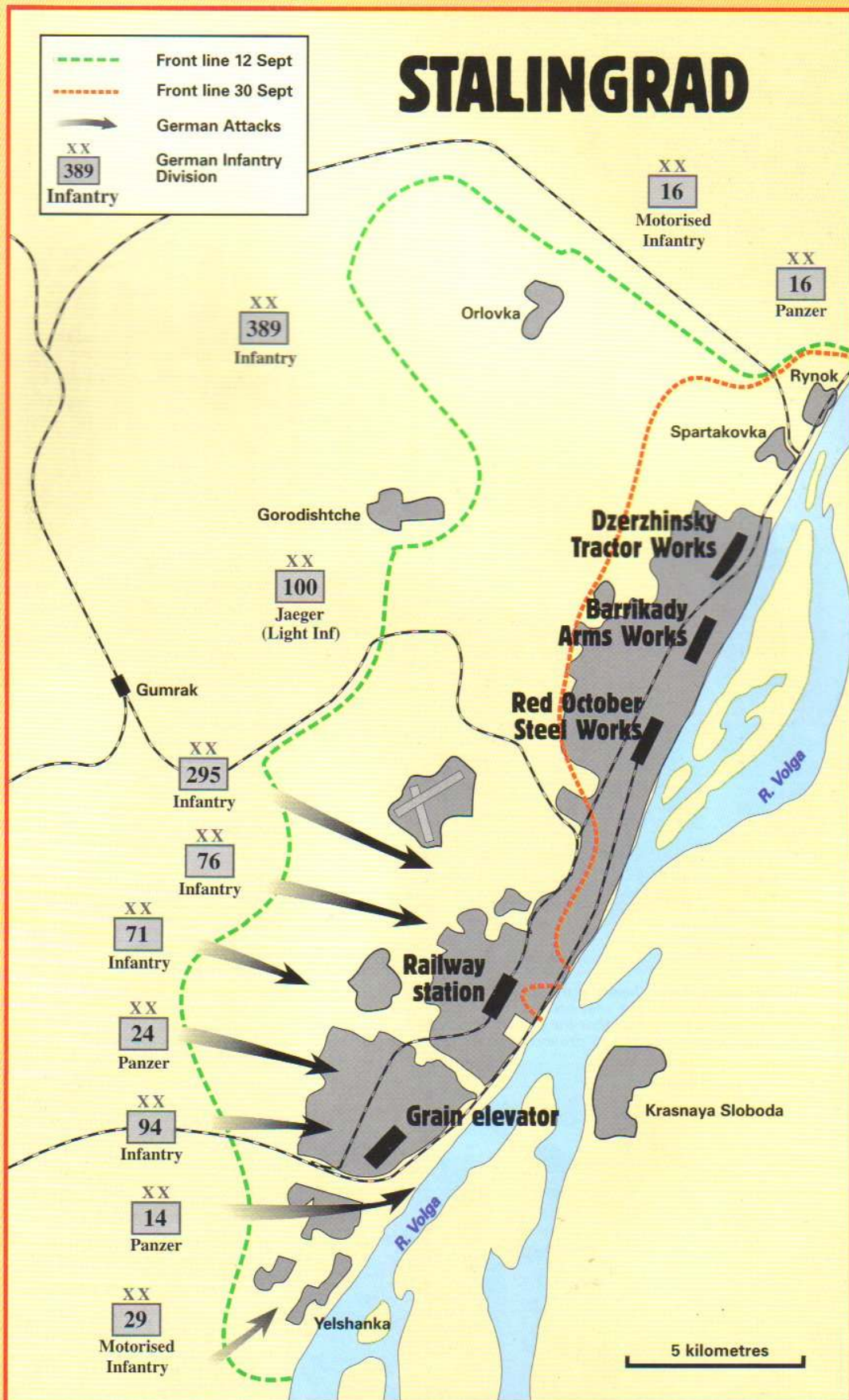
The town had half a million inhabitants, and much of the civilian population had been marched out to dig trenches and anti-tank ditches. But that was not the only German worry. German intelligence had not warned the units taking part that Stalingrad sprawled for more than 30 kilometres along the Volga and that, in places, the western edge of the city was more than eight kilometres from the bank of the river.

LOW GERMAN MORALE

Generaloberst Von Richtofen, commander of Luftflotte IV, complained of the lack of spirit in the 6th Army. On 22 September he wrote "In the town itself progress is desperately slow. The 6th Army will never finish the job at this rate. Above all because it is threatened from the North by the Russians and because reinforcements arrive only in dribs and drabs. We have to fight endless engagements, taking one cellar after another in order to gain any ground at all".

Russian soldiers, spurred on by patriotic propaganda, were now fighting in circumstances in which their own natural talents were an advantage, and their lack of armour and mobility did not matter.

They fought from holes burrowed in rubble, from the blackened caverns of burned-out offices, from behind parapets of gaunt tower blocks; they fought for every yard of every street and every alleyway in the city.



HITLER'S BATTLES 16



Above: Soviet troops on the east bank of the Volga engage Axis forces on the west bank with a PPSH 41 sub-machine gun and a Degtyarev light machine gun. Fierce Red Army resistance meant that the Sixth Army never established a bridgehead on the Soviet side.

Below: A Bersaglieri runs for cover across the iron-hard steppe. The large Italian Eighth Army guarded the German northern flank, but proved no match for the Soviet 1st Guards and 5th Tank Armies.



Below: Winter brought new horrors to the Germans. Cold-weather gear, while of better quality than the year before, was nevertheless in short supply – and Goering's promise that the Luftwaffe would be able to supply the Sixth Army from the air proved to be disastrously wrong.



from the First World War. As the blistering 50 degree heat of the Russian summer turned into autumn, rain filled the trenches and the soldiers endured a miserable existence.

SOVIET OFFENSIVE

On 19 November Paulus received alarming signals from his divisions on the steppes. Soviet forces were attacking in unbelievable strength from their bridgeheads over the Don. Division after division reported massive artillery barrages, intense air attack and wave after wave of tanks. Some units were already failing to respond to radio calls from 6th Army headquarters. Then the Soviets attacked in the south too. By 23 November the encirclement was complete. Some 300,000 German and allied soldiers were trapped. And the 6th Army's winter clothing was still in storage at the Tatsinskaya depot, 200 km away.

Paulus reported that he had only enough food for a week and that fuel and ammunition was running low. His subordinates begged him to order a break out, but Paulus' superior, Field Marshal von Manstein, refused to hear of it. Hitler insisted that *Festung Stalingrad* hold out until relieved. The expression 'fortress' gave false comfort: the troops had no proper fortifications, just the holes in the frozen ground they had managed to excavate with their remaining explosives.

GOERING'S BOAST

At this critical moment, Hermann Goering intervened fatally. Smarting from humiliation – the RAF was making a mockery of his proud boast that Germany would never be bombed – he announced that the Luftwaffe would fly in enough supplies to keep the 6th Army fighting.

Most of the senior officers involved in the airlift assumed that this was to be for a very limited period until the army broke out or a relief force went in. In fact, any staff officer with the 6th Army's order of battle

and a pencil could work out just how ridiculous Goering's promise was.

It is usually stated that the 6th Army's minimum supply requirement was for 500 tonnes per day. However, 500 tonnes was in fact the requirement for Seydlitz's 51st Corps alone. The German 6th Army could not have survived on anything less than 1500 tonnes of supplies: the airlift only managed an average of about 100 tonnes. To keep 6th Army going would have required more than the entire Luftwaffe could fly in.

WINTER HELL

The temperature sank remorselessly. Blizzards swept across the steppe. Huddled in underground bunkers, the 6th Army counted the days until a relief operation rescued them. Fighting rations were reduced to 200 grammes of horsemeat and 200 grammes of bread per day. Support troops received half that, and there was nothing at all for Soviet prisoners held inside the pocket. Yet the ordinary soldiers believed, against mounting evidence to the contrary, that Hitler would get them out.

Staff officers, privy to Paulus' indecision and teleprinter messages from Army Group Don, suspected the worst. Although Paulus' headquarters continued to pass on Manstein's promise to save them, the female nurses in the base hospital were flown out of the pocket on the first evacuation flights.

Manstein failed. He sent *Generaloberst* Hoth to blast a way through the Soviet lines on 12 December, and in a week of desperate fighting, his panzer corps got close enough to see the horizon lit up at night, flares rising and falling over the pocket. His mission had been anticipated by Zhukov, who had already taken steps to counter any relief attempt. Within days, the Soviets attacked the Italian and Romanian armies along the river Chir, north west of Stalingrad. Another great breakthrough was achieved, and Hoth's relief force



Defenders of the Krasny Oktiabr steel works watch as a flight of Ilyushin Il-2 Stormoviks pass low overhead on their way to attack nearby German positions. The first Wehrmacht assault on Red October started on Sunday 27 September 1942, and over the next three months the complex was to host some of the most bitter and costly fighting of the war in the east.

Red October

THE SPRAWLING HULK OF Stalingrad spread out along the banks of the Volga was stiffened by a spine of huge industrial plants, notably the Dzerzhinsky tractor works, the Barrikady ordnance works, and the huge Krasny Oktiabr (Red October) steel works.

The first German attack, on 27 September, was mounted by the 389th Infantry Division, the 100th Jaeger Division and the 24th Panzer Division. Over the next two weeks the Germans ground their way through the tractor factory and on to the Barrikady plant. There was a lull before the attacks continued, on 14 October.

The battle for Red October became a bloody stalemate, made worse by the coming of sub-zero temperatures and the fact that German units had been ground down to ten percent of their nominal fighting strength. The last major push, on 11 November, was brought to a halt when Zhukov launched his great counter attack on 19 November.



Above: Stalingrad's industrial sector was perfect for ambushes. A German MG34 team engages snipers on the roof of a factory.

Right: The German bombardment of Red October turned the steel works into a massive rubble heap: hard to attack across, but offering the defenders countless fighting positions.





Above: On 19 November, a massive Soviet barrage opened up on the Rumanian divisions to the north of the Sixth Army. This was followed by the overwhelming attack of no less than six Soviet armies, spearheaded by the 1st Guards and 5th Tank Armies.

Below: The Soviet plan was simple: penetrate the Axis defences at their weakest points, then drive deep behind the bulk of the enemy forces. Attacking with considerable verve, the two arms of the Soviet pincer met on 23 November. Hitler's Sixth Army was trapped.



Below: Italian troops on the Don front fall back in the face of overwhelming Soviet power. Short rations, low ammunition, sickness and above all the intense cold meant that the Axis forces around Stalingrad had to retreat or be annihilated.



was compelled to turn away and meet the new threat. The 6th Army was abandoned.

The airlift collapsed on Christmas Eve when an enterprising Soviet tank commander drove his T-34s to the limit of their endurance. The tanks over-ran Tatsinskaya airfield just as the last Ju-52s scraped off the runway. The 6th Army fought on, but as autopsies revealed, the men were starving to death. Sentries committed suicide. After Christmas was celebrated, with an odd mixture of foreboding and acute sentimentality, some officers shot themselves.

To stiffen his soldiers' resolve, Paulus had 364 of his men executed for cowardice.

NOWHERE TO GO

Stalin ordered the pocket crushed in January, and a renewed Soviet blitzkrieg broke into the perimeter west of the city. The survivors fled into the city where every cellar became packed with wounded men. Typhus and dysentery swept through the ranks of emaciated, frost-bitten soldiers. The scale of suffering was outside the Germans' experience, but was even worse for the Soviet prisoners-of-war held inside the pocket. The handful of survivors found by the Red Army had been forced into cannibalism to stay alive.

The last airfield inside the pocket was at Pitomnik, and hideous scenes ensued as the Soviets approached. Thousands of wounded men crawled

MARSHAL Rokossovsky's Don Front launched Operation Uranus, attacking the Romanian Third Army at 07.30 on the morning of 19 November. Vatutin's South West Front followed half an hour later, broadening the attack to a width of more than eighty kilometres. Over half a million troops and about a thousand tanks quickly brushed the Romanians aside. At 10.00 the next day, Yeremenko's Stalingrad Front joined the attack, and the two huge pincers met near Kalach on 23 November, sealing off the German Sixth Army.

SW Front Vatutin

1st Guards Army
5th Tank Army
21st Army
338,631 men
2,201 artillery pieces
4,300 mortars
628 rocket launchers
730 tanks

Don Front Rokossovsky

65th Army
24th Army
66th Army
292,000 men
1,838 artillery pieces
3,937 mortars
435 rocket launchers
180 tanks

Stalingrad Front

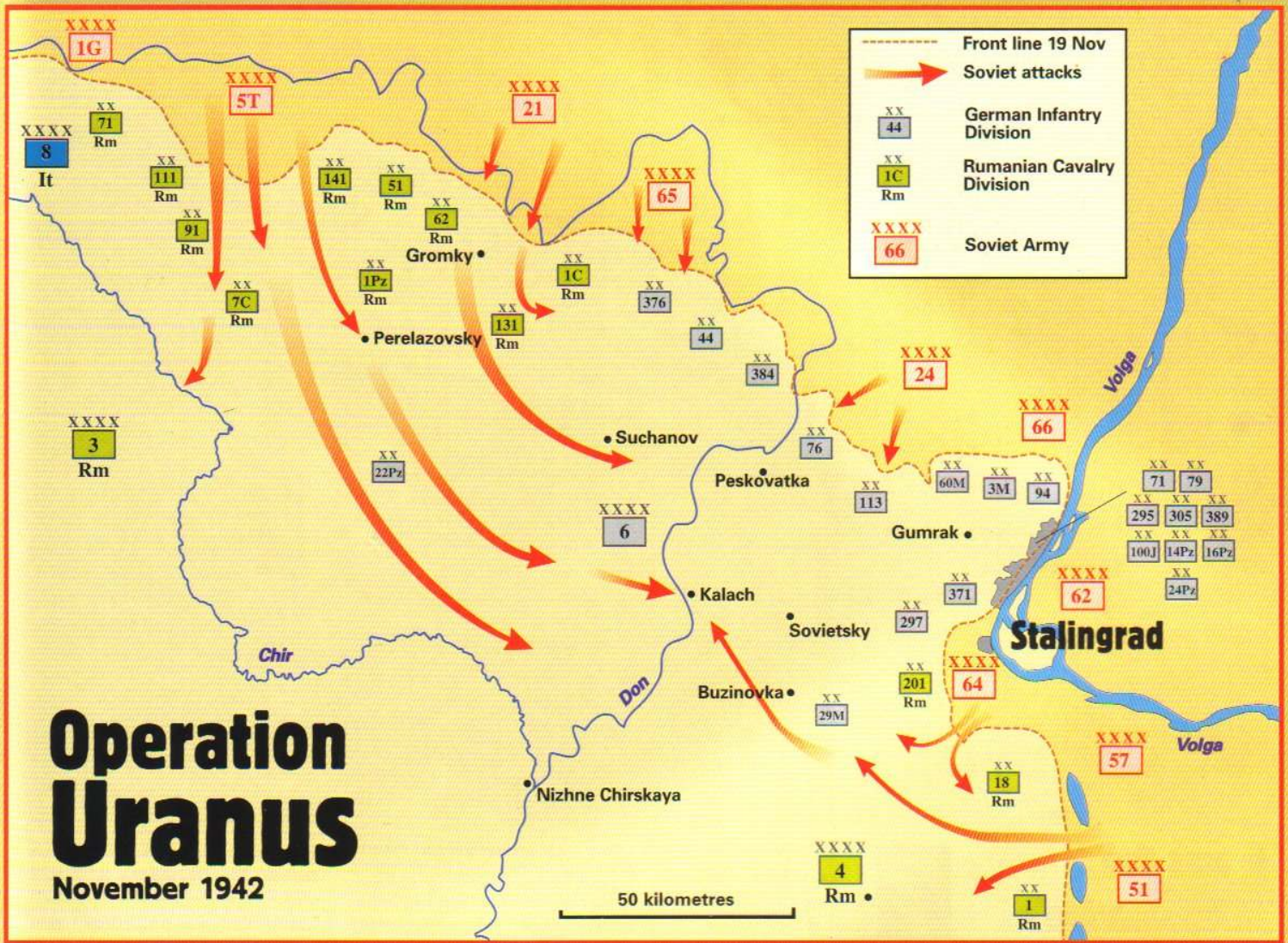
Yeremenko
62nd Army (in Stalingrad)
64th Army
57th Army
51st Army
383,000 men
2,500 artillery pieces
3,300 mortars
337 rocket launchers
650 tanks

through the snow and desperate fights broke out to get aboard the last aircraft.

Hitler had forbidden generals or party leaders to use their powers to extract friends and relatives; some men were nevertheless spirited out. Albert Speer's brother discharged himself from the field hospital where he was being treated, and was eventually posted missing. Hitler's nephew Leo Raubal was a captain in the engineers, and survived to be taken prisoner. Hitler would later offer Stalin his son Jacob in exchange for Leo, but the Soviet leader refused.

Some 25,000 sick and wounded were evacuated, and a number of specialists and officers ordered home before Stalingrad surrendered, but a far

Sixth Army Encircled



greater number of men died as frost-bitten limbs and wounds turned gangrenous. Anaesthetic ran out. No rations were given to the wounded after 11 January.

SIXTH ARMY FALLS

Hitler promoted Paulus to Field Marshal, on the tacit understanding that no German Field Marshal had ever been taken alive. But Paulus refused to kill himself and surrendered on 30 January. Ironically, it was the anti-Nazi old soldier, Strecker, commander of 11th Corps, who held out longest. He surrendered his isolated pocket in the north of Stalingrad on 1 February. Small parties broke out on to the steppe, trying to make their way back, and were spotted from time to time by Luftwaffe

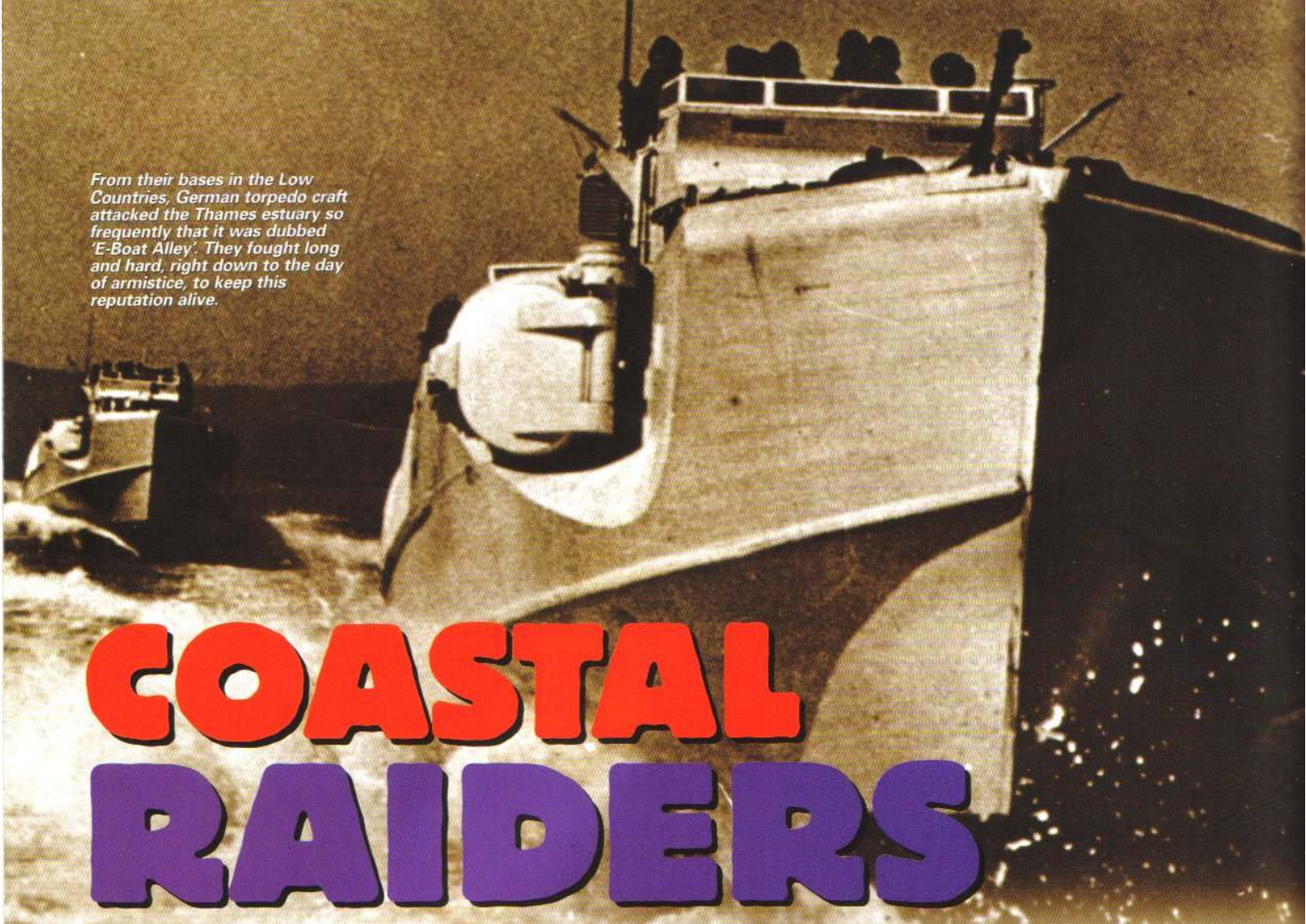
reconnaissance flights. None made it.

For the families and friends of the men involved, Stalingrad was more than a defeat: it was a betrayal. Hitler gave his word that the 6th Army would be saved. Instead, the soldiers were sacrificed to Hitler's crackpot strategy and Goering's vanity.

Of the 300,000 men in the pocket, 91,000 survived to surrender, and half of them were dead before spring. Curiously, since they had beheaded the Polish army in 1941 by shooting 15,000 officers, the Soviets treated the 6th Army's officers with relative forbearance: 95 per cent of them would survive the war. But 95 per cent of the ordinary soldiers died in Soviet POW and labour camps.

Below: Romanian General Demetriu, Lieutenant General Edler von Daniel and XIV Corps commander General Helmuth Schlömer are seen after the surrender of Stalingrad. Grim though their imprisonment will be, it will be nothing to the hell ordinary German soldiers will suffer.





From their bases in the Low Countries, German torpedo craft attacked the Thames estuary so frequently that it was dubbed 'E-Boat Alley'. They fought long and hard, right down to the day of armistice, to keep this reputation alive.

COASTAL RAIDERS

It was the *Kriegsmarine's* capital ships which stole the headlines, but most of the valuable war work was done by hundreds of small escort vessels, attack craft and coastal raiders.

34 HITLER'S THIRD REICH

THE GERMAN motor torpedo boats called *S-Boote* or *Schnellboote* (Fast Boats) were known by their crews as *Eilboot* or 'boat in a hurry'. The British called them E-Boats, which legend has it stood for 'Enemy' boat.

Several classes of *S-Boote* were built before and during the war. Although diesel-drive was specified from the outset the original boat *S1* constructed at the Lürssen yard was powered by three 800-hp Daimler-Benz petrol engines whilst Daimler-Benz and MAN developed a suitable diesel unit. Originally of 32.4m in length the type had to be stretched to 34.7m to cope with an increase in speed. This length remained constant to the war's end. The later *S-Boote* carried their two torpedo tubes forward of the wheelhouse, giving space for two skid-mounted reloads abaft of them.

Later innovations were to raise the forecastle, so enclosing the tubes, leaving a forward gunpit between them. The raising of the craft's freeboard also gave it an enviable dryness.

Later craft displaced between 100-105 tonnes with a complement which increased from about 28 at the beginning of the war to 32-34 men by 1944.

The boats had hammock space for half the crew. The rest slept on or under tables in the wireless room or by the torpedo tubes. A very small galley allowed them to prepare hot meals and coffee. Space was so cramped that the crew normally lived ashore and stayed aboard only for operations and maintenance.

The craft had a distinctive rudder configuration that produced the so-called *Lürssen* effect. It consisted of two small rudders fitted aft of the wing propellers that could be rotated outboard 30 degrees without

moving the main centreline rudder. This altered the flow of water aft and resulted in greater acceleration and propeller efficiency, and by 1945 such innovations had pushed speed to a maximum of 42 knots.

UPGUNNED CRAFT

Armament varied. For most of the war it consisted of one or two 2-cm Flak (anti-aircraft) guns and two 21-inch torpedo tubes. From 1944, as Allied air power increased and rocket-and cannon-armed aircraft regularly strafed German convoys, the defensive weapons fit was upgraded. Late-war boats typically carried one 4-cm and three 2-cm Flak or one 3.7-cm and five 2-cm Flak guns. Larger types could also carry six or eight mines in place of reload torpedoes.

The driving force behind the establishment of *S-Boote* as a separate command was *Kapitän* Rudolf Petersen. Taking



command of the 2nd *S-Boote* Flotilla in August 1938, he led it through the first campaigns of the war. Under his command from 1939-41 it fought in Norway, the North Sea and the Baltic. In April 1942, after seven months ashore as a staff officer he was given the position of commander of *S-Boote*. His headquarters were in Scheveningen, Holland, from where he ran operations in the Channel, North Sea, Baltic, Black Sea and Mediterranean.

In Berlin the effectiveness of *S-Boote* was acknowledged on 30 May 1941 when a *Schnellboot-Kriegsabzeichen* or S-Boat War Badge was instituted. The badge, designed by Wilhelm Ernst Peekhaus, showed a short high-silhouette *S-Boote* cutting through the water. It was surrounded by gold oak leaves and surmounted by a gold national emblem (eagle and swastika). Prior to the issue of the badge *S-Boote* crews received

Above: The R-Boote were originally 60 ton craft armed with a couple of 20mm cannon plus depth charges or mines as appropriate. From R17 on they grew to S-Boote size, and mounted an increasing armament of up to one 37mm gun and six 20mm mounts. This was necessary on the vital Norwegian iron ore route.

Right: *S-Boote* of 1. Flotilla, flying the Kriegsmarine ensign before the swastika was incorporated into the new flag of 1934. This unit had mixed powerplants, the standard diesels only being introduced with S6. The other five boats had petrol engines.



the Destroyers War Badge.

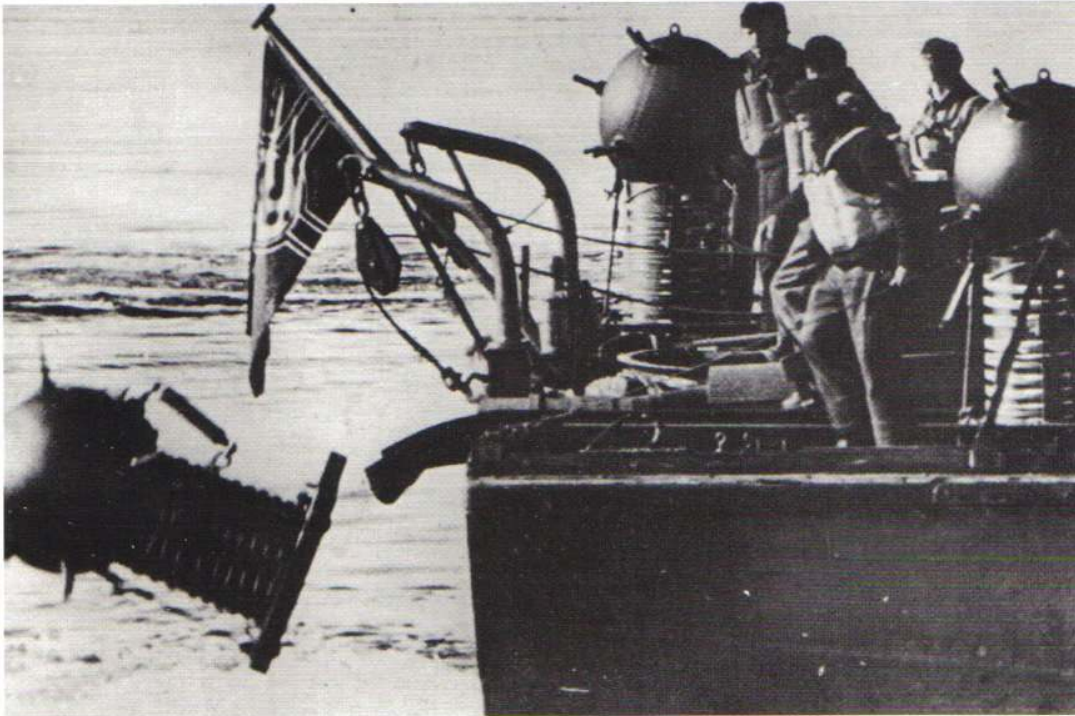
Criteria for the award of the badge were 12 sorties against enemy vessels or installations, outstanding leadership, a particularly successful mission or to be wounded during the course of an action. A new badge designed jointly by Peekhaus and Captain Petersen was instituted in January 1943 showing a longer, newer *S-Boote* and an enlarged national emblem.

A special version of the first pattern *S-Boote* badge was awarded to eight outstanding commanders. These men had already received the Knight's Cross to the Iron Cross with Oakleaves but continued to perform bravely in combat. The award consisted of a silver badge with gold plate and nine small diamonds in the arms of the swastika. The award of the *Schnellboot-Kriegsabzeichen* mit

Brillanten was the prerogative of Grossadmiral Erich Raeder, the head of the Navy and not the Führer. They were presented at an informal luncheon.

E-BOAT ALLEY

During the war the Allies played down the effectiveness of *S-Boote*. The popular press regularly carried stories of *S-Boote* being sunk or driven off by the Royal Navy.



The *S-Boote* were, however, respected by coastal forces in the Channel since they were fast, well armed and more capable of surviving battle damage than Royal Navy Torpedo Boats.

CONVOY WAR

The first truly effective campaign launched by the *S-Boote* was against the convoys carrying coal to the mainly coastally-sited British coal-fired electricity generating stations. Even before the fall of Dunkirk *S-Boote* were deploying from Dutch ports covering the 160 km to the English coast in under three hours. Such was the menace that they posed to Allied shipping that the stretch of coast from the straits of Dover northwards toward the Thames Estuary was known as 'E-Boat Alley'. Publicly, the government played down the problem, but soon embarked on a programme of motor gun-boats to beat the enemy at its own game.

S-Boote were small enough to be transported by rail or to operate on the larger European rivers, so they joined the Italian forces in the Mediterranean and also saw action in the Black Sea.

The greatest test for the *S-Boote* was the Allied invasion of Normandy in June 1944. There were five flotillas of *S-Boote* (totalling 37 craft in varying states of readiness) based along the coast opposite southern England in 1944 under Petersen's command.

The units involved were the 8th *Schnellboote* Flotilla at Ijmuiden, Holland, the 2nd at Ostend, Belgium, the 4th at Boulogne, France, with the 5th and 9th at Cherbourg, France. The 9th was commanded by the aristocrat *Fregattenkapitän* Gotz Baron von Mirbach.

SURPRISE ATTACK

However, before D-Day the *S-Boote* had caused the invasion fleet serious losses. On 26 April 1944 the US Army 4th Infantry Division undertook an exercise codenamed Tiger. Landing craft would transport troops and



Top: R and S-Boote could carry up to eight mines in place of additional torpedoes. The Germans laid and maintained extensive minefields around their coastal waters, especially in the English Channel and the Baltic. In terms of tonnage sunk, mines were far more effective than fast torpedo boat attacks.

Above: S142, built in 1943, mounted a 40mm AA gun aft and a 20mm gun in the forward position. Displacing over 100 tons, S142 was among the largest E-Boote built, but suffered in terms of reduced speed.

Left: An R-Boote flotilla operating in the Baltic. This type was the mainstay of the highly successful German and Finnish naval operations in the area. The high point came in 1943. In that year not one Soviet ship or submarine penetrated the anti-submarine net erected from Helsinki to Tallinn.





vehicles to the sandy beaches at Slapton Sands, Devon in preparation for their landings at UTAH beach in Normandy. During the night of 27-28 April an inadequately escorted convoy of eight US Navy Landing Ships, Tank (LST) was attacked by nine *S-Boote* from the 5th and 9th *Schnellboote* Flotilla operating from Cherbourg.

HEAVY LOSSES

The Germans sank LSTs 507 and 531 and severely damaged LST 289, which limped into Dartmouth harbour after the exercise. The Germans returned safely having suffered no losses, but 441 US soldiers and 197 sailors perished in the attack – more than were to die at UTAH beach on D-Day – and the loss of the tank landing craft imposed constraints on Allied planners.

For the successful action *Kapitän* Petersen was awarded Oakleaves to his Knight's Cross. The attack on the Tiger convoy was not made public until after D-Day, since it would have provided the Germans with an indication that the invasion of Europe was in the offing. This secrecy resulted in a myth of a 'cover up' over Tiger. On the night of 5-6 June 1944, when the first airborne landings were reported, the *S-Boote* put to sea at 3 am but made no contacts.

INVASION

On the night of 6-7 June all available *S-Boote* were deployed, but the 5th Flotilla lost *S139* and *S140* to mines. The *S-Boote*

sortied almost every night, weather permitting. In the face of the massed Allied firepower they enjoyed limited success. German press reports of their actions were couched in dramatic language, which gave a false impression of their effectiveness.

Even so they were a threat. Among the *S-Boote* successes in June 1944 were the torpedoing of the battleship *HMS Nelson* and the destroyer *USS Meredith*, which was later sunk. Other warships damaged included the frigate *HMS Halstead* and LST 538. *S-Boats* sank the landing craft *LCT 875, 105, 376 and 314*, and the freighters *SS Dungrange* (621 Gross Registered Tons – GRT), *SS Ashanti* (534 GRT), and *SS Brackenfield* (657 GRT), all of which were carrying fuel and ammunition. The tugboats *Partridge* and *Sesame* fell victim to the *S-Boote* as, rather prosaically, did an element of the Mulberry artificial harbour under tow.

During the same month, *S-Boote* sank two of their opposite numbers – the gun boat *MGB 17* and the torpedo boat *MTB 448*. The *S-Boote* also dropped 68 mines and on the night of 22-23 June, *S130, S145 and S168* transported artillery ammunition and 24 officers from Saint-Malo to Cherbourg,



Above: *S-Boote* saw service in East and West. They were in action against the Red Fleet in the Black Sea, where they helped frustrate Soviet attempts to resupply Sevastopol, and later in the Sea of Azov, where they supported the Wehrmacht's drive into the Caucasus.

which had been cut off by the advancing US forces.

The greatest damage to the *S-Boote* force came not from surface action, but from the air. During an RAF air raid on Le Havre on 14 June, three larger torpedo boats and 14 *S-Boote* were destroyed. Earlier, on 11 June, *S136* was sunk in action, and on 13 June fighter bombers intercepted and sank *S178, S179 and S189*. On 23 June *S190* was also sunk.

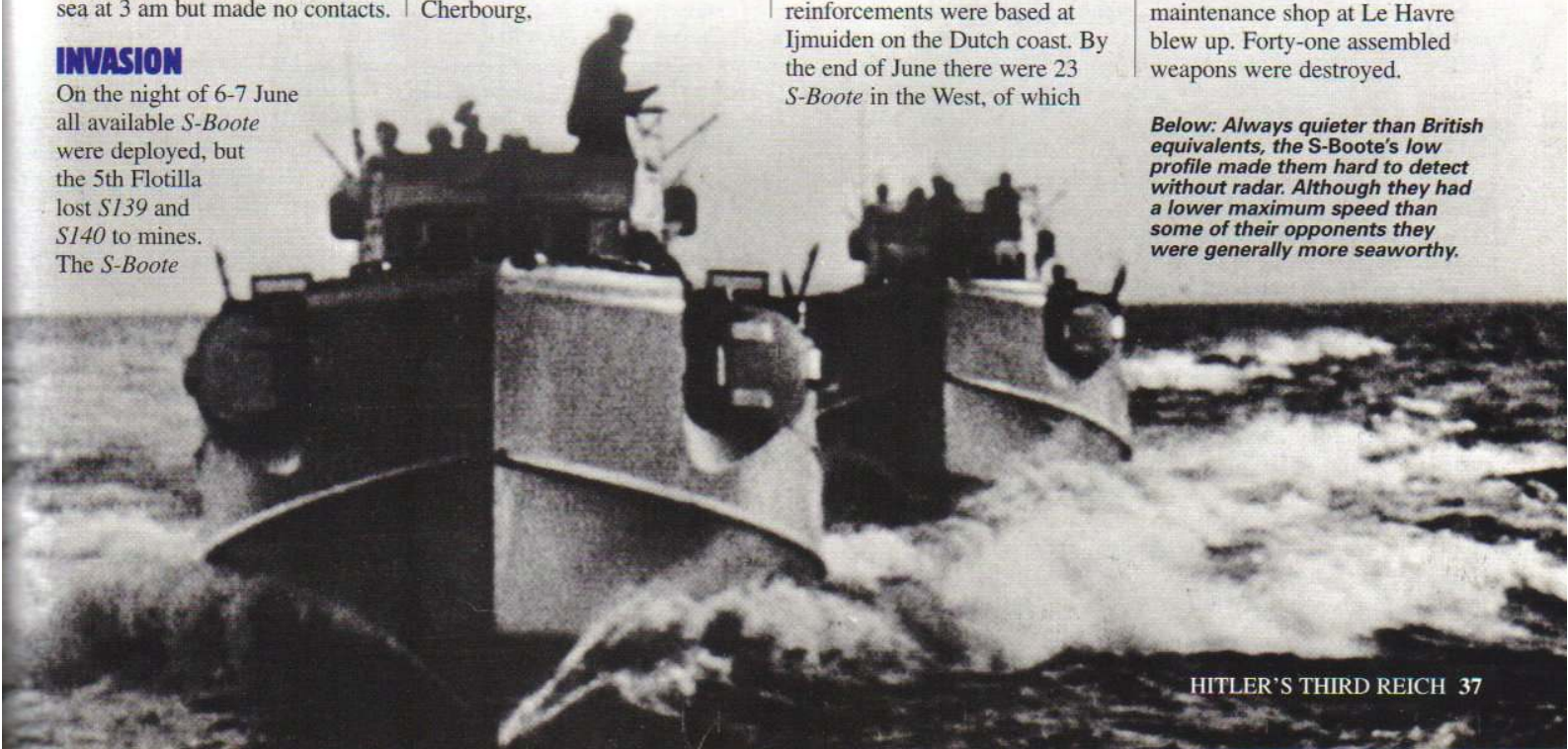
On 26 June eight boats from the 6th *Schnellboote* Flotilla arrived from the Baltic. The reinforcements were based at Ijmuiden on the Dutch coast. By the end of June there were 23 *S-Boote* in the West, of which

only 15 were battle ready.

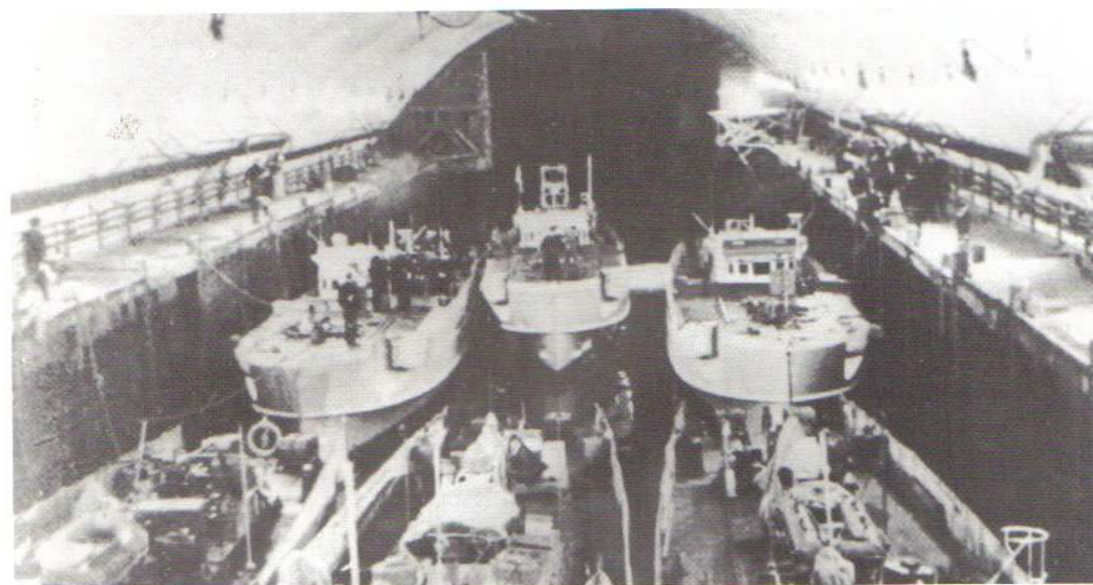
The *S-Boote* were now equipped with new, more effective T-5 *Zaunkönig* acoustic homing torpedo. These could also be fitted with *Flächen-absuchende Torpedos* – surface search or FAT – controls, which enabled the weapon to follow an indirect, random-seeming path to the target.

The supply of torpedoes could not keep up with their use and the shortage was compounded when in a suspected act of sabotage early on the morning of 6 July the torpedo assembly and maintenance shop at Le Havre blew up. Forty-one assembled weapons were destroyed.

Below: Always quieter than British equivalents, the *S-Boote*'s low profile made them hard to detect without radar. Although they had a lower maximum speed than some of their opponents they were generally more seaworthy.



HITLER'S WAR MACHINE



Above left: The end came on 13 May 1945. At Felixstowe German S-Boote became the first surface craft to surrender. On board one of the Kriegsmarine's vessels was Rear Admiral Karl Bruning (far left) who had been in charge of S-Boot operations and who signed the instrument of surrender.

Above: Craft constructed after S66 featured an armoured conning tower as a defence against the increasingly powerful gun armament carried by English boats.

Left: S-Boote in their lair. They issued forth from their concrete pens to attack the regular coastal convoys off the English coast. Bombing the pens was often attempted but this seldom destroyed them. Finally, it was air superiority and improved gun-boats with radar which defeated the S-Boot.

As the Allies became established on the Normandy beach-head, the military situation further deteriorated, although the S-boats continued to enjoy some limited success. In July they torpedoed the frigate HMS *Trollope*, causing such severe damage that she was written off as a constructive loss.

At the close of the month, S91, S97 and S114 of the 6th *Schnellboote* Flotilla were operating away from the beach-head. At 1.22 am on 31 July they intercepted a convoy east of Eastbourne. Firing six FATs, they sank the freighter SS *Samwake* (7,219 GRT) and torpedoed four more ships totalling 26,699 gross registered tonnes.

The introduction of the new long-range T-3D torpedoes in August did not improve the success of the S-Boote. In engagements between 4 and 15 August they launched 84

T-3Ds but hit only the old British cruiser HMS *Frobisher*, the minesweeper HMS *Vestal*, the freighter SS *Iddesleigh* (5,205 tonnes) and the tender *Albatross*.

The S-Boote arm continued to fight on, like their colleagues in the submarine service. But by the end of 1944 the game was up. In their attacks against the English coastal convoys as many S-Boote as colliers were being lost.

RAUMBOOTE

Raumen is the German verb 'to clear'— hence the *Raumboote* or R-Boote type of coastal minesweeper. These craft were of such a useful size that they also served as minelayers and, suitably rearmed, as convoy escorts. In this guise they were involved in frequent clashes with British craft. Like the S-boote, they were built of wood on metal framing. The first 16 boats constructed in the early 1930s

displaced only 60 tons and were 26m long. Propulsion was by twin screw diesels, producing a modest speed of 17 knots. From R17 onwards however, their dimensions were similar to the S-boote though with extra draught. Even with progressively modified diesels the type rarely exceeded 20 knots. Nearly 350 of all types were built between 1931 and 1945.

R-Boats were designed as coastal minesweepers. They mounted a single 2-cm Flak, but by the end of the war the type was being used as a minelayer and also a Flak ship. The normal complement was one officer and 28 or 29 men, but with the increase in armament this increased to two officers and 36 to 38 men. In 1944 R401 mounted a 3.7-cm Flak and three twin 2-cm Flak guns as well as 12 mines. The 83 R-Boote built at the end of the war displaced 148

tonnes with a full load and had a maximum speed of 21 knots, half that of the S-Boote, and a range of 990 nautical miles. The craft were 39.4m long, 5.7m wide and had a draught of 1.6m.

On D-Day between 50 and 60 R-Boote were available for operations, but air raids on Le Havre and Boulogne damaged or sank 14. R49 was badly damaged by British MTBs while she was on a minelaying sortie from Le Havre on 6-7 June.

SINKING SHIP

All through the war, German coastal craft proved to be tough adversaries for Allied air forces as well as surface vessels. As the war turned against Nazi Germany, the risks of putting to sea increased, but like their U-Boat brethren, S-Boote and R-Boote crews continued to run the gauntlet of rocket-firing fighters and roving MTBs.

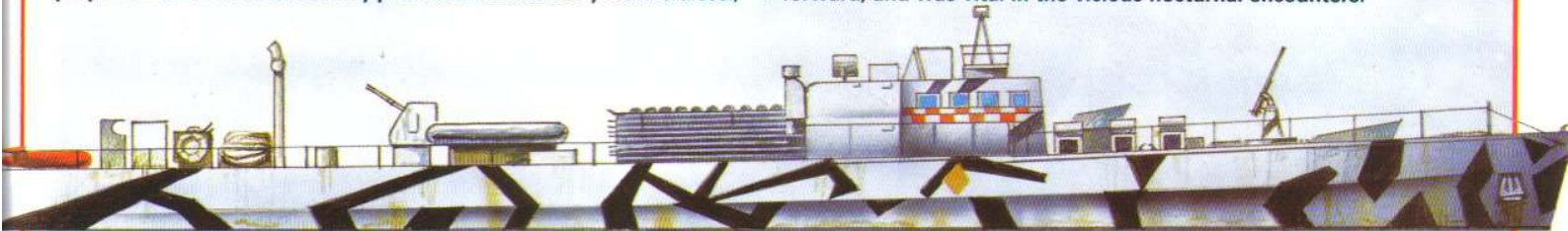
HIGH-SPEED

FAST COASTAL CRAFT proved their worth during WWI, but only the Italian and German navies went on to develop the type in the inter-war period. The other naval powers concentrated on major units. The British in particular, in spite of their Great War successes with coastal motor boats, focussed on policing their distant Empire. So by 1939 the Axis had a considerable technological lead over their opponents.

The Germans developed the *S-Boot* under the noses of the Allied regulating authorities, in the guise of sporting-club colours. The Germans were also the only nation interested in developing a small diesel propulsion unit: no other country produced a satisfactory marine diesel,

and they had to rely on hazardous petrol engines with their highly volatile fuel.

Hull construction was typically of wood, overlaying a timber or light alloy frame. Only wood could withstand the stresses of high speed travel. Nevertheless, hard-used coastal craft need constant attention and had a short operational life. The development of the 21 inch torpedo dictated later design of torpedo boats. Close-in fighting led to the development of varying configurations of cannon and machine guns as the situation demanded. Radar was another great leap forward, and was vital in the vicious nocturnal encounters.

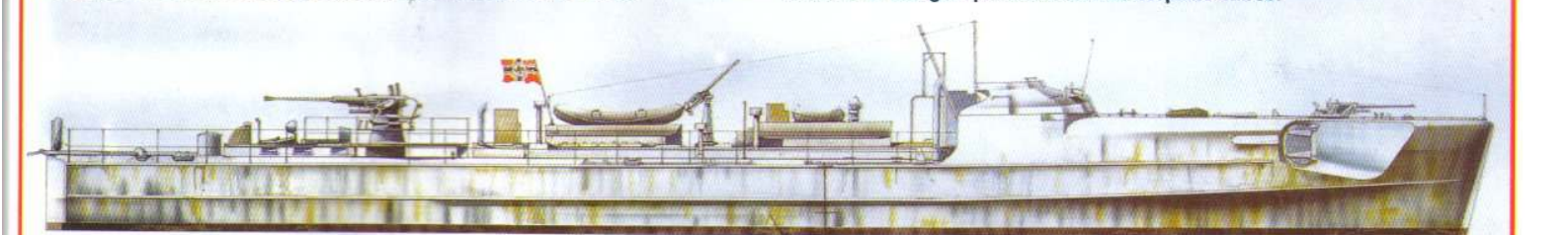


R-Boot (above)

The *R-Boote* were pressed into service in an increasing variety of roles as the war progressed. They saw action primarily in the Baltic, as convoy escorts and minelayers. Although they were fitted out with increasingly powerful diesels they could rarely manage more than half the speed of their more glamorous counterpart the *S-Boot*.

S-Boot (below)

The *S-Boat's* round-bilged hull design enabled the craft to maintain high speeds even in rough seas. Later models, as depicted below, were heavily armed and armoured. The raised forecastle enclosed the torpedo tubes: more guns were carried, including an extra weapon forward in the gun-pit between the torpedo tubes.



Fairmile 'D' Type (below)

Practical pre-war experience demonstrated that British MTBs would probably have difficulty in penetrating a target against a determined escort. So the Fairmile was developed. It was durable, fast and very well armed. It also possessed the great advantage of radar. The type earned its spurs attacking convoys en route to the Afrika Korps.



Elco 80-ft Type (left)

The American PT boat was fast and very manoeuvrable, though early short versions tended to 'slam' violently resulting in structural damage. Later boats were lengthened for improved habitability as well as sea-worthiness. With speed of 40 knots, they were armed with four torpedoes and a wide variety of cannon and machine guns. At least 358 of the larger PT-Boats were constructed.



Italian MTB (right)

The Italians had enjoyed considerable success with their small torpedo craft in WWI, and continued to develop the type in the inter-war period. The result was the MAS 500 series. Armour and armaments were subordinated to speed, as befitting the Italian temperament. In the Mediterranean the craft proved unseaworthy and further lacked defensive armament and durability.





PANZERWAFFE



A LONG WITH the Stuka, the panzer was the defining symbol of National Socialism in its most aggressive form: *Blitzkrieg*. But the terrifying armoured warfare that the panzer represented was not a Nazi creation. It evolved from doctrines created by the German General Staff, embodying tactical lessons learned in the last years of World War I. The *Panzerwaffe* also had traditions rooted firmly in Prussian and Imperial German military history.

PANZER ORIGINS

The first German panzer units were formed in September 1917, but had little impact. Their main legacy to the armoured troops of the Third Reich was the Death's Heads painted on their early tanks, a symbol which would be adopted by the Wehrmacht's *Panzerwaffe*.



Above: The ultimate panzer troops of World War II: the crew of a King Tiger in Budapest in 1945. Although their tank is ten times bigger than those used a decade earlier, their uniforms – apart from their headgear – have changed very little.

Left: An early tank commander stands proud in the turret of his tiny Panzer I. Until 1940/41, the characteristic Basque-style beret was an easy way of recognising panzer troops in the field.



A few tanks were used by *Freikorps* units in the anti-Communist battles of 1919 and 1920, but under the terms of the Versailles treaty the *Reichsheer* was forbidden armour. Tanks would not make a reappearance in German colours until Hitler came to power. However, under the Weimar government the *Reichsheer* had done a considerable amount of theoretical training with motorised and armoured formations, training which was enhanced by practical work carried out at a secret tank school in Kazan, Russia. Motorised units involved in these operations generally wore black leather protective clothing.

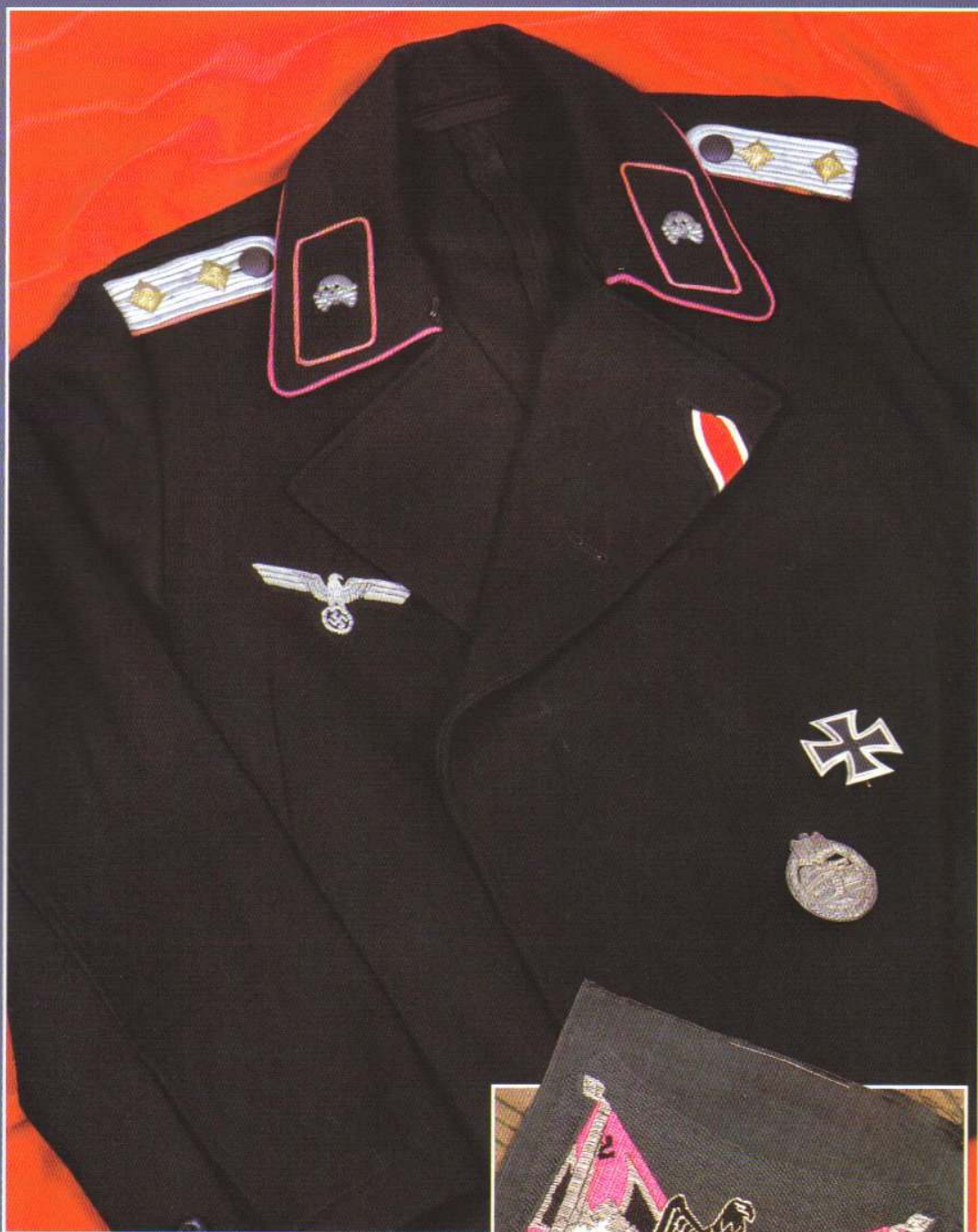
NEW PANZERWAFFE

The *Reichsheer* began to develop a new uniform for armoured troops in 1929, troop testing taking place in 1932. By the time the first Wehrmacht armoured units were formed in 1934, their members had been issued with the uniform which, with a few changes, was to be worn right up to the end of World War II.

The romantically-inclined claim that the black panzer uniform – protective headgear, combat blouse and trousers – was chosen to incorporate the traditions of the Kaiser's cavalry, particularly the Death's Head Hussars. The choice of Hussar-style swallow-tail regimental flags undoubtedly reinforced the notion, and indeed, tank troops were often called 'The Führer's Black Hussars' in the output of Goebbels's propaganda ministry.

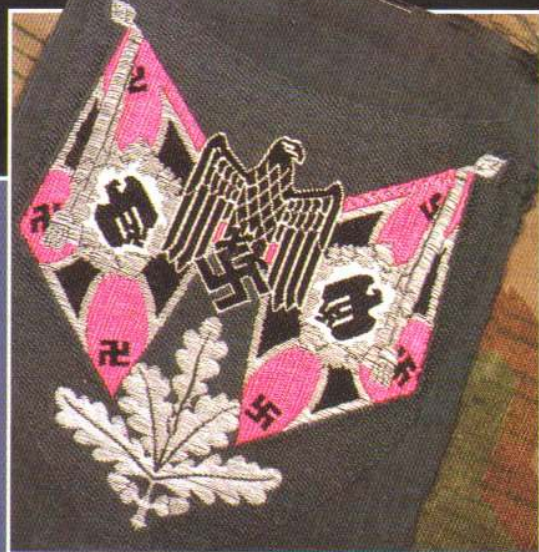
There may have been an element of truth in this view, but the main reason that black clothing was chosen was more likely to have been practical rather than traditional. Tanks are large, messy things, and oil stains are much less obvious on black than on field gray.

The most characteristic item of panzer clothing was the panzer beret. It was worn from 1934 through the early campaigns of the war, and was occasionally seen as late as 1943.



Above: The *Sonderbekleidung* or special black panzer uniform introduced in 1934 was designed for maximum practicality in the cramped confines of an armoured vehicle. Short and tight-fitting, the blouse lacked external pockets and buttons to snag on the many switches and protruberances found in a tank. This example carries a Hauptmann or Captain's shoulder straps, together with the Iron Cross 1st and 2nd Class and the silver tank combat badge, awarded for participating in at least three actions.

Right: The sleeve emblem worn by a colour sergeant or ceremonial flag bearer. Each branch of service in the German army had its own colour – orange for engineers, white for infantry, gold for cavalry and so on. It was used on insignia and as piping on uniforms. Panzer units wore pink.



NAZI SYMBOLS

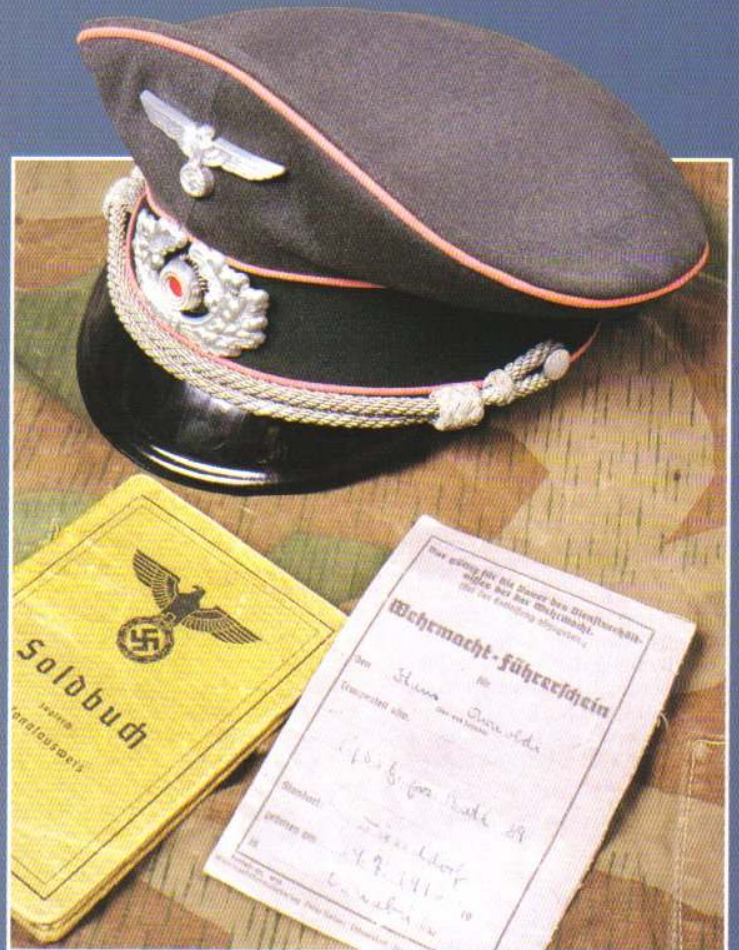


Above: Hauptmann Franz, commander of a battery of assault guns and holder of the Ritterkreuz, sits in his Sturmgeschütz. Assault gun crews wore panzer-style uniforms in field grey, without the death's head. Since the assault guns were part of the artillery arm, their crews wore red artillery Waffensfarbe.

Left: Waffen SS tank crews wore army-style panzer uniforms, with arm of service piping on their shoulder straps and the SS-style eagle on the left arm. This expensively tailored jacket was made for an Hauptsturmführer or Captain. The decorations include the tank assault badge together with the SA Sports Badge and the German National Sports Badge in bronze. The lack of further combat awards suggests that it dates from early in the war.

Below and below left: Panzer troops wore the distinctive Baskenmutze or Basque beret (below) over a hard rubber padded crash helmet (below left). In 1934 the oakleaf cockade was embroidered direct onto the cloth, but after the introduction of the 'National Eagle' or eagle and swastika, this was replaced by a woven emblem which was sewn on to the beret. SS troops wore similar headgear, but with a large SS eagle and SS-style death's head.





ARMoured UNIFORMS

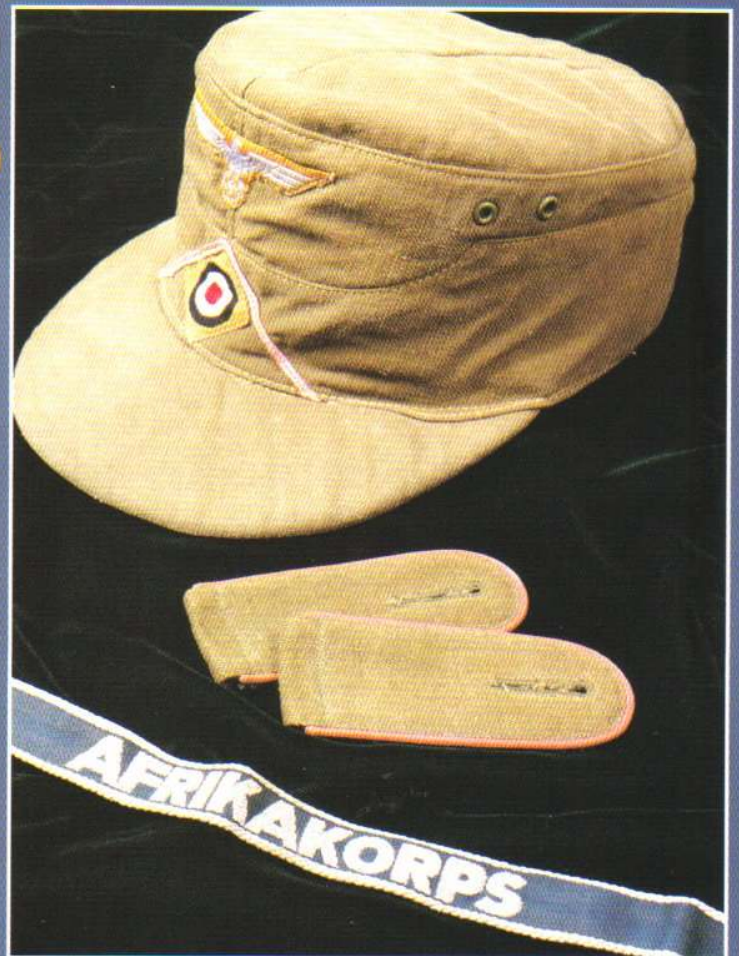
Although armoured troops wore their special panzer uniform operationally, they were also issued with a more conventional uniform. Before the war, the walking out uniform, originally introduced in the 1920s, usually carried *Waffenfarbe* on the epaulettes, around the collar and piping the edges of the coat. In wartime, this was usually replaced by the field jacket: the German army uniform with standard double bars on the collar in place of the *Totenkopf* of the black tunic. This was simpler and less heavily decorated, with panzer pink only appearing on the epaulettes and on the collar bars.

Tank crew and anti-tank units carried pink *Waffenfarbe* all through the war. At the beginning of the conflict, *panzergrenadiers* also wore pink, but late in the war this was changed to green. Armoured reconnaissance units originally wore cavalry gold, but in the early years of the war they were given their own brown *Waffenfarbe*. From 1943, however, they wore the standard panzer pink.

Top left: The army version of the national eagle and swastika symbol was worn on headgear and on the right breast of the tunic. The triangular cloth version was attached to the peaked Tyrolean-style M43 field cap. The pink-piped death's head collar patch was worn on the black panzer tunic up until the end of the war. The grey-piped epaulette was worn briefly in 1940 by combat engineers attached to panzer units.

Top right: Peaked caps trimmed with appropriate *Waffenfarbe* were worn by all ranks. Caps for NCOs and enlisted men had a leather cap strap, while officers wore silver metallic cords. This cap has a metal-stamped oakleaf wreath and national symbol as issued: many officers replaced one or both with woven examples.

Right: Items worn by panzer crewmen in the desert. The Afrika Korps cuff title was introduced in July 1941. The brown *Tropisches Einheitsfeldmütze* or tropical field cap is made of hard-wearing cotton drill.



A Z

OF THE THIRD REICH

Nacht-und Nebel Erlass

Although in general the Nazis ruled with the consent of ordinary Germans, the party consolidated its control by means of terror. That terror was made an instrument of policy in the occupied territories. In the infamous 'Night and Fog' decree issued by Hitler on 7 December 1941, the Führer ordered that, "persons endangering German security" were not to be openly tried by the judicial system, but were simply to disappear into the "night and fog".

General Wilhelm Keitel, the head of the *Oberkommando des*

Wehrmacht's announced, "in principle, the punishment for offences against the German State is the death penalty. Effective and lasting intimidation," he added, "can only be achieved by capital punishment or by means which leave the population in the dark about the fate of the culprit."

The *Nacht und Nebel* policy was carried out by the SS security service, the SD. There is no accurate count of their victims: though nearly all of those arrested were sent to concentration camps or

summarily executed, the very secrecy of their disposal means that no records were kept – they were lost in the night and the fog.

Right: German military police round up striking workers in the occupied territories. Many of these men will be sent to camps in Germany, disappearing "into the night and the fog", never to be seen again.

See also Nazi Horrors

Issue 7: Concentration Camps

See also Nazi Horrors

Issue 11: Occupation



National Redoubt

Supposedly located in the mountains of South Germany and Austria, centered on Berchtesgaden, the 'National Redoubt' featured heavily in the late war propaganda of Dr Goebbels. It was claimed to be a vast fortified area in the Alps, in which the German army and people would hold out against the invading Allies. Broadcasts hinted that Adolf Hitler would escape from Berlin to continue the struggle from the National Redoubt. From there he would overcome Germany's enemies, using the secret weapons which Nazi propaganda had been promising for some time.

It was a fantasy. The National Redoubt never really existed. But it had a considerable effect on the

war all the same. The Americans feared that southern Germany might be a base for sustained guerrilla activity by fanatical Nazis and that heavy fighting in the mountains might be necessary. As a result, General Eisenhower refused to consider Montgomery's plans for a direct thrust on Berlin, aimed at beating the Russians to the capital. Instead he opted for a more careful approach, husbanding his forces for the battles in the National Redoubt – which never happened.

Right: US troops receive an ominous warning as they cross into Germany. The fear of hordes of die-hard Nazis forted up in the 'National Redoubt' had a major influence on Allied policy.



Nationalpolitische Erziehungsanstalten

The National Political Education Institutes or Napolas were state-supported secondary boarding schools. Originally established in Prussia after the end of World War I, they were absorbed into the Nazi system on 14 April 1933. The Napolas were intended to produce future leaders of government and the armed services, while the rival *Adolf Hitler Schule* which operated under the aegis of the Hitler Youth were dedicated to breeding future party leaders.

The Napolas came under the control of August Heissmeyer of the SS in 1936. Although originally modelled in part on

English public schools, they were intended to restore the type of education formerly given in Prussian cadet academies.

The syllabus was based on that of ordinary German Grammar schools, with political education taking the place of religious studies. As with all such Nazi establishments, sports and pre-military training were emphasised – so much so that academic standards of graduates were considered inferior of those of normal grammar schools. In their fifth year students spent six to eight weeks helping on farms, and in their final year they worked in factories or mines.

By 1938 there were 23 Napolas, including four in Austria and one in the Sudeten area of Czechoslovakia. There was also one *NS Deutsche Oberschule* run by the Party. This was a school for future leaders run in direct competition with the Napolas. It was located at Feldafing on the Starnberger See.

Right: Although the Napolas were originally independent of the Nazi Party, being run by the Ministry of Education, they were soon brought under complete Nazi control. By the middle of the 1930s membership of the Hitler Youth was compulsory for all students at the institutes.



National Socialist organisations

Authority in the Nazi Party flowed from the Führer through the *Reichsleiters* and *Gauleiters* to the local party organisations throughout Germany. But that authority was diluted in the case of a number of more-or-less independent Nazi organisations. The most important were the *Gliederungen*, or 'Limbs' of the party. These included the SA, the SS, the Hitler Youth, the NSKK, the NSFK, and the National Socialist German Students League or NSDStB – an organisation devoted to the furtherance of the Nazi way of life among students.

The NS *Frauenschaft* or National Socialist Woman's Union was also a *Gliederung*. Founded on 1 October 1931 and initially headed by Elsbeth Zander, it was reorganised under the leadership of Gertrud Bäumer and then under Gertrud Scholtz-Klink. The purpose of the organisation was to ensure that members brought up their families as patriots and believers in the precepts and orders of Adolf Hitler.

An important early group was the NS *Betriebszellenorganisation* – NS Shop Cell Organisation or NSBO – which created a network of industrial propaganda units in

factories. Established before the seizure of power to combat the unions, the NSBO considered itself the "SA of the workplace" and aligned with the revolutionary wing of the party. It lost influence after the Röhm purge. German workers said that NSBO actually stood for "Noch sind die Bonzen oben" – "The party bosses are still on top".

Other party organisations were classed as *Abgeschlossene Verbände*, or 'groups belonging to the party'. These included professional organisations such as the *Nationalsozialistische Dozentenbund* or NS Lecturers

Alliance, a professional association of university lecturers established under Nazi party control and designed to keep university teachers in line with the party ideology; welfare and charity organisations like the *Nationalsozialistische Volkswohlfahrt* or NSV, devoted to the welfare of party members and their families especially mothers and children.

There were also *betreute Organisationen* or supporting organisations like the German Labour Front – officially independent but in effect an arm of the party.

National Socialist publications

Although Germany lacked a true national press before the Nazi assumption of power, it had one of the most extensive networks of local publications in the world – 4,700 newspapers in 1933. The press gradually came under control of the Nazis, until by 1943, nearly 80 percent of the 977 remaining papers were controlled by Max Amann, Hitler's former sergeant major and business advisor and now *Reichsleiter* and

head of the NSDAP Publications office.

From the start, the National Socialists recognised the importance of the printed word. The first Nazi newspaper became the *Völkischer Beobachter*, the official Party daily. Other influential early publications included the *Nationalsozialistische Briefe* or NS Letters, a fortnightly newsletter founded by Gregor Strasser in 1924 to keep Nazi

officials informed about the proper party line. As editor Strasser hired the 27-year-old writer and dramatist, Dr Joseph Goebbels, who took Hitler's side in the Hitler-Strasser feud.

The *Nationalsozialistische Monatshefte* or National Socialist Monthly was a magazine edited by Alfred Rosenberg and devoted to propaganda for Nazi ideology. It was regarded as the monthly equivalent of the *Völkischer*

Beobachter.

Each of the Party organisations produced its own journals. These included *SA-Mann*, the Storm trooper weekly and *Der Schwarze Korps*, of the SS. More popular were the illustrated news magazines such as the *Illustrierter Beobachter*. At the bottom of the heap were the scurrilous, racist and pornographic outpourings of Julius Streicher's *Der Stürmer*.

Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei

The National Socialist German Worker's Party or NSDAP was created in April 1920 to succeed the *Deutsche Arbeiterpartei*. In 1921 the party elected Adolf Hitler chairman, with almost unlimited authority. By 1922 he was known as the Führer, or leader.

The NSDAP distinguished itself from other parties of the era by calling itself a 'movement' or a 'collective party', even though it was anti-democratic and authoritarian in structure.

Although Hitler was the dominant figure from its earliest days, he faced considerable opposition within the movement. For instance, the *National-*

sozialistischer Volksbund – NSVB, or National Socialist People's Association – was a Party splinter group active in Munich in 1925 which was opposed to Hitler. The NSVB was defeated by Hitler in the struggle for power.

By 1933 the NSDAP was a monolithic organisation constructed on the Führer Principle: all power flowed down from Hitler at the top through eight layers of administration and control to the humble *Parteigenosse* or Party Comrade.

After the seizure of power in 1933, the NSDAP became the *Staatspartei*, the only legal political party in Germany, and in

December 1933 the 'Law to Secure the Unity of Party and State' was passed. The NSDAP became identified with the nation, to the extent that the term *Nationalsozialistischer Deutscher* became synonymous with citizenship in the Third Reich.

The NSDAP and all of its organisations were declared illegal by the Allied Control Council in October 1945.

Right: The NSDAP grew into a massive organisation with tentacles penetrating every aspect of German life and society. The most obvious manifestation of Nazi power came at the annual Parteitag held at Nuremberg.



Nationalsozialistisches Flieger-Korps

The NSFK or National Socialist Fliers Corps was the last of the major party organisations to be created. Hitler's decree of 17 April 1937 established the NSFK as a special flight training unit of the NSDAP, replacing the DLV – the *Deutsche Luftsport Verbände* or German Air Sports Association.

The DLV had been set up in 1933 as a means of training pilots for the clandestine Luftwaffe. The

NSFK had a similar purpose, often stated as to "secure for the German Luftwaffe a strong and well-prepared new generation of fliers".

The NSFK taught youngsters how to build and fly model gliders, and provided glider and powered pilot training for the air wing of the Hitler Youth. The NSFK operated flying schools which provided free instruction to suitably qualified 18-year olds, as

well as offering refresher training for qualified pilots returning from military or labour service.

Right: Although considered a 'Limb of the Party' like the SA or the SS, the National Socialist Fliers Corps never had the size or influence of its contemporaries. Nevertheless, its activities with young aviation enthusiasts contributed to the extremely high standards displayed by the Luftwaffe at the start of the war.



Nationalsozialistisches Kraftfahr Korps

The National Socialist Motor Corps was a paramilitary unit of the NSDAP, regarded as a *Gliederung* (limb) of the Nazi party along with the SA, the SS and the Hitler Youth.

It was founded in 1930 as the NSAK (Nazi Automobile Corps), a branch of the SA. The NSAK's task was to provide a vehicle pool – mostly private cars – to assist in the increasing demands of party electioneering. It was renamed the NSKK in 1931, and in 1934 became independent of the SA.

The NSKK's functions changed considerably when the Nazis came to power. One aim was to teach motoring skills to the young, and more than 200,000 teenagers were taught to drive between 1933 and 1939. The NSKK also acted as traffic police, and provided a nationwide

breakdown assistance service. The NSKK – or more precisely, the affiliated *Deutscher Automobil-Club* – was also the only official organiser of motor sports in the Third Reich.

As war approached, the NSKK was given a more overtly military role. It was used to provide transport for the massive engineering projects of the *Organisation Todt*, and had responsibility for instructing army reserve drivers.

With the outbreak of war, the NSKK provided logistics support to the Wehrmacht and the Luftwaffe, and units occasionally found themselves in combat.

In 1931 NSKK membership was less than 10,000; at the time of the invasion of Poland it had grown into a formidable body half a million strong.



See also Inside the Third Reich

Issue 19: Nazis and the car

See also Symbols

Issue 12: The NSKK

Above: Members of the Nazi Automobile Corps parade during the period when the Weimar government banned uniforms. Part of the SA, the organisation was to become the NSKK

Nationalkomitee Freies Deutschland

The anti-Nazi National Committee for a Free Germany was established in the Soviet Union in July 1943. It included German POWs (mostly captured at Stalingrad), Communists and exiled anti-fascist writers.

It was associated with the League of German Officers or BDO, founded by senior German POWs including General Walther von Seydlitz-Kurzbach and Field Marshal Friedrich Paulus.

The National Committee published a weekly newspaper, made radio broadcasts, delivered leaflets and made loudspeaker addresses to try to influence German soldiers in the front line. However, they had little effect, since ordinary Germans blindly trusted Hitler almost to the last year of the war.

Members of the National Committee were branded as traitors by the Nazis, and were

also distrusted by internal opposition groups within Germany.

The Committee was dissolved in November 1945, but its Communist members under Walther Ulbricht provided the postwar government of the German Democratic Republic.

Right: Friederich Paulus, defeated at Stalingrad, became a key member of the Committee.



Naujocks, Alfred Helmut (1911 - 1960)

An SD 'dirty tricks' specialist, Naujocks was a graduate of Kiel University, an SA street fighter who joined the SS in 1931 and was a close friend of Heydrich. In August 1939 he led a squad in Polish uniform in the Gleiwitz

Raid to provide 'evidence' of provocation for Germany's attack on Poland. On 8 November 1939 he abducted British secret service agents S. Payne Best and R. H. Stevens from Venlo in Holland. He joined the Waffen-SS in 1943

after being dismissed from the SD, and was wounded in action on the Eastern Front. He was later held responsible for the murder of Danish resistance men. On 19 October 1944 he deserted to the Americans, but escaped

from custody in 1946. He was suspected of being part of the Odessa escape route. He settled in Hamburg and worked as a businessman. He died in Germany in 1960 without ever having been brought to trial.

Nebe, Artur (1894-1945)

Artur Nebe was born in Berlin. After army service during World War I, he joined the Berlin criminal police, quickly rising to inspector. He joined the Nazi Party in 1931, and in 1933 became a senior investigator in the Prussian Secret State Police.

He became head of the Kripo (Criminal Police) in 1936, and in 1939 headed Department V of Heydrich's RSHA. In 1941 Nebe commanded an *Einsatzgruppen* in Russia, where he was responsible for the deaths of tens of thousands of Jews and commissars. There is some evidence that he was sickened by

the mass murder, and arranged his own transfer back to Berlin.

However, Nebe seemed to have lived a double life. He had contacts with anti-Nazis like Hans Gisevius, whom he was able to warn about the plans of the Gestapo. His change of loyalty took place, he said, as early as 1934, when Goering ordered him to kill Gregor Strasser.

As a high ranking SS officer he was considered a possible successor to Heydrich. In 1944, Nebe was tasked with investigating the July Bomb Plot, but his friendship with Gisevius was exposed. Consequently, he

fled and remained in hiding until January 1945, when he was betrayed by a former mistress. He was tried before the People's Court, and executed on 21 March 1945.

Right: Artur Nebe accompanies his boss, Reinhard Heydrich. Nebe, an experienced police officer, commanded the plainclothes branch of the German police.

See also Inside the Third Reich

Issue 3: Gestapo

See also Inside the Third Reich

Issue 20: Opposition to Hitler



Nero Befehl

The 'Nero Command', also known as the *Verbrante Erde Befehl* or 'Scorched Earth Command' was a Führer decree issued on 19 March 1945, in the last days of the Third Reich. Scorched earth tactics had long been a characteristic of the war on the Eastern Front, and as Germany's enemies crossed the borders of the Fatherland from West, East and South, Hitler ordered that the Reich itself should be made into a wasteland. Ostensibly this was intended to hinder the Allies, but the reality was that Hitler felt that if he fell, then Germany should fall also.

The order called for the destruction of the nation's

industrial infrastructure, including bridges, industrial plants, roads and railway links. Armaments minister Albert Speer realised that Germany would need to rebuild itself after the war, and worked hard to prevent *Gauleiters* implementing these orders. He arranged to have all orders channelled through his ministry, and in cooperation with the Wehrmacht managed to block most of the destruction.

Right: Even though Allied bombers had already converted most large German cities into piles of rubble, Hitler wanted to turn the rest of Germany into a gigantic funeral pyre for the Nazis.



Neu Beginnen

New Beginning was a secret Social Democrat group led by Fritz Erler and Waldemar von Knöringen. *Neu Beginnen* operated in Berlin and the Ruhr after the Nazis came to power.

The group's main underground publication, *Der Grüne Otto* (Green Otto), brought news of the outside world and its view of Nazi policies.

In 1936 and 1937, New

Beginning members were checking weapons and ammunition movements and reporting to foreign contacts about the extent of German rearmament.

The group survived until 1944, when in the aftermath of the 20th of July Bomb Plot many of its members were arrested. With the leadership scattered the group disbanded.

Neuengamme

Concentration camp in the marshy Elbe country southeast of Hamburg. Initially established in a disused brickworks late in 1938, the camp was a sub-unit of the Sachsenhausen camp north of Berlin. It became an independent camp in 1940.

The first task of the camp's inmates was to re-activate the brick factory on behalf of the *Deutsche Erd und Steinwerke GmbH*, an SS company which had contracted to provide building materials for the city of Hamburg. The prisoners also dug a canal to the Elbe and built a railway spur linking the camp to the main line.

In 1941 Neuengamme received several thousand Soviet prisoners of war. The Gestapo and the SD

sent many thousands of prisoners to the camp from all over occupied Europe.

From 1942, Neuengamme became a major supplier of cheap labour for armaments factories all over northwest Germany. Some, like the Walther small arms concern set up factories near the camp: other concerns, such as Volkswagen and the Hermann Goering Steel works were the sites of Neuengamme satellite camps. Altogether the Neuengamme system grew to include some 70 sub-camps.

Conditions in Neuengamme were particularly bad: about half of the more than 100,000 prisoners sent there between 1940 and 1945 died from unnatural causes. Many perished

as human guinea pigs in medical experiments, with much research on children. At the close of the war some 7,000 prisoners died when the ships aboard which they were being held were sunk by the RAF.

Right: Prisoners at Wobbelin, one of Neuengamme's sub-camps, soon after the camp was captured in May 1945. The inmates are starved and exhausted, huddling together for warmth and ignoring the body of one of their fellows who died just before liberation.



See also Nazi Horrors

Issue 28: Neuengamme

Neuordnung

The New Order was Hitler's vision of the total rearrangement of German and European life to conform to the Nazi *Weltanschauung* or 'World View.' Central to the *Neuordnung* concept was a German empire stretching unbroken from the Urals to the Atlantic.

The true aim of the New Order was camouflaged behind the *Europa Ideologie*, which depicted a fraternal European struggle against Bolshevism. However, the

reality of what the Nazi leadership intended was the creation of a Jew-Free Europe by means of the Final Solution; the Germanisation of the conquered Slavic lands in the east; and the subjugation of the peoples of western Europe into a condition of serfdom.

From this base, the Greater German Reich would be in a position to win a struggle for world domination with the United States once the final victory had been won in the east.



Above: Hitler's dreams of a 'New Order' would have seen the total reconstruction of Europe on a titanic scale, purely to benefit Germany.

Neurath, Constantin von (1873 - 1956)

Diplomat and Hitler's adviser on foreign affairs, Constantin Freiherr (Baron) von Neurath was born into an aristocratic family at Klein Glattbach, Württemberg on 2 February 1873. A career diplomat, he joined the Foreign Office in 1901 and was widely travelled. In the 1920s he was successively ambassador in Copenhagen, London and Rome. He was appointed Foreign Minister by von Papen in 1932, a position he continued to hold under Hitler.

On 31 January 1933, the day after Hitler came to power, von Neurath joined the Nazi Party and the SS, rising by 1943 to the rank of *SS-Obergruppenführer*.

In February 1938 he was replaced by von Ribbentrop after questioning the expansionist plans proposed at the Hossbach Conference, though he remained a Minister without Portfolio. In March 1939 he was appointed Reich Protector of Bohemia and Moravia. Even though he persecuted the churches and

enforced Nazi race laws, he was considered too liberal and was replaced by Heydrich in 1941. He was forced to retire in 1943.

Von Neurath was tried as a major war criminal at Nuremberg and was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment. He was released in 1954 on health grounds.

Right: The aristocratic Baron von Neurath prospered through his support of Hitler. However, he was outmanoeuvred by Joachim von Ribbentrop, who took his job as Nazi Foreign Minister in 1938.



Niemöller, Martin (1892 - 1984)

Born in Lippstadt, Westphalia Martin Niemöller joined the Imperial Navy in 1910. He served with distinction as a U-boat commander in World War I, winning the *Pour le Mérite*. After the war he became a theological student. Ordained in 1924 he initially welcomed the Nazis, but when their true character was revealed he led the anti-Nazi Lutheran Confessional Church.

Hitler grew to hate Niemöller after the Pastor and the Führer argued furiously in a face to face meeting in January 1934. In March of that year Niemöller was

dismissed from his post at Berlin Dahlem, but a storm of protest led to his reinstatement.

In June 1937, after a powerful sermon condemning the Nazis, Niemöller was arrested. In March 1938 he was found guilty of "abuse of the pulpit," fined and sentenced to eight months imprisonment. Hitler had the Pastor re-arrested immediately after the trial, and he was sent to Sachsenhausen as a 'personal prisoner of the Führer.'

Niemöller spent the next eight years in concentration camps, being transferred to Dachau in

1941. Imprisoned alongside Catholic priests, he became an advocate of ecumenicism.

Liberated by the Americans in 1945, Niemöller became an active campaigner for pacifism and against nuclear weapons.

Right: Martin Niemöller was a thorn in the side of the Nazis, but in spite of Hitler's personal enmity, the U-boat commander turned Pastor survived the war.



**See also Inside the Third Reich
Issue 28: Nazis and the Church**

Nietzsche, Friedrich (1844 - 1900)

Friedrich Nietzsche was one of the most important German philosophers of the 19th Century. Born in Röcken, Saxony, he grew up in a devout Protestant family but became fiercely anti-Christian – a religion whose basis of repentance and redemption he rejected utterly. He fell ill in 1879, and was declared insane in 1889, probably due to a syphilitic infection.

Nietzsche's importance to Fascism came with his idea that the 'Will to power' was the

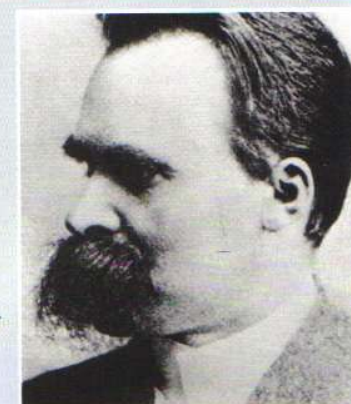
mainspring of life, and that one day the *Übermensch* would arise. This 'superman' would be a superior being, who would rule disdaining man-made laws and man-made gods.

What the Nazis did not accept – or conveniently ignored – was Nietzsche's opinion that the idea of a pure Teutonic race was "a mendacious swindle". Nietzsche felt that the Germans preferred the mysterious and the chaotic and loved "all that is cloudy indistinct, watery, veiled,

nebulous and opaque."

Nietzsche's work would certainly have been familiar to the young Adolf Hitler, but how much it influenced the future dictator's worldview is open to debate.

Right: Friedrich Nietzsche undoubtedly had an influence on the rise of Fascism – Mussolini called the 'Will to Power' the most important idea in history – but he would have hated the uses to which the Nazis put selected aspects of his philosophy.



Nolde, Emil (1867 - 1956)

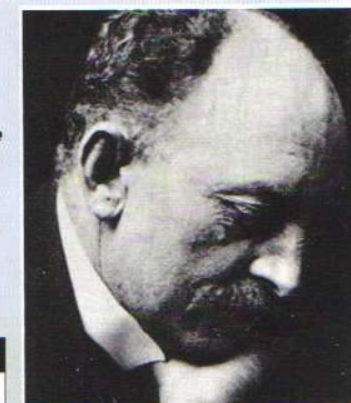
Expressionist artist, furniture designer and woodcarver. Born Emil Hansen, he took the name of Nolde from his birthplace – Nolde in Südtondern. He initially lectured on industrial art but later became known for his explosive paintings featuring supernatural and mystical themes. Influenced by Munch and van Gogh, Nolde painted in Munich and Paris before settling in a fisherman's cottage on the North Sea Coast.

Emil Nolde was a Nordic mystic and a vehement anti-

Semite, and was an early convert to National Socialism. However, in the 1920s his work was condemned by Alfred Rosenberg's Combat League for German Culture. Even though Nolde's paintings were collected by Joseph Goebbels, when the Nazis came to power he found his work out of favour. In 1936 about 1,000 of his paintings were confiscated as degenerate art, and in 1941 he was barred from painting. He died in Seebüll, North Friesland on 15 April 1956.

Right: Emil Nolde was a crusty, unpleasant character who was a whole-hearted National Socialist and could not understand why the Nazis banned his work. Although forbidden to paint in 1941, he continued to work in his fisherman's cottage. He produced more than 1200 watercolours – the so-called 'unpainted pictures', which are considered to be amongst his finest creations.

**See also Inside the Third Reich
Issue 6: Art in the Third Reich**



COMING IN THE NEXT VOLUMES OF **HITLER'S** Third Reich

SECRET HITLER FILES

Hitler the Orator
Mein Kampf



THE HOLOCAUST

Did the Allies know?
Wannsee Conference

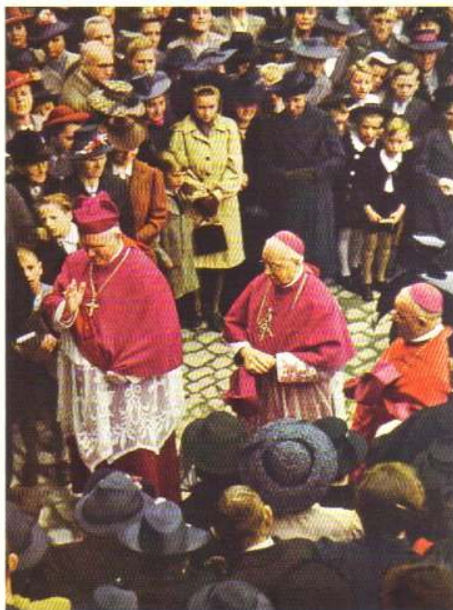


HITLER'S HENCHMEN

Baldur Von Schirach
Heinz Guderian

HITLER'S WAR MACHINE

Assault Guns
Ju 88
V-Weapons



INSIDE THE REICH

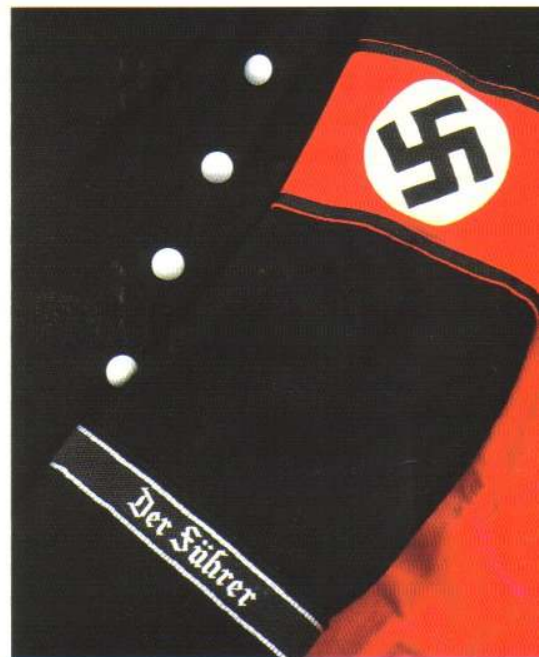
Church and State
German opposition
The Party State

NAZI HORRORS

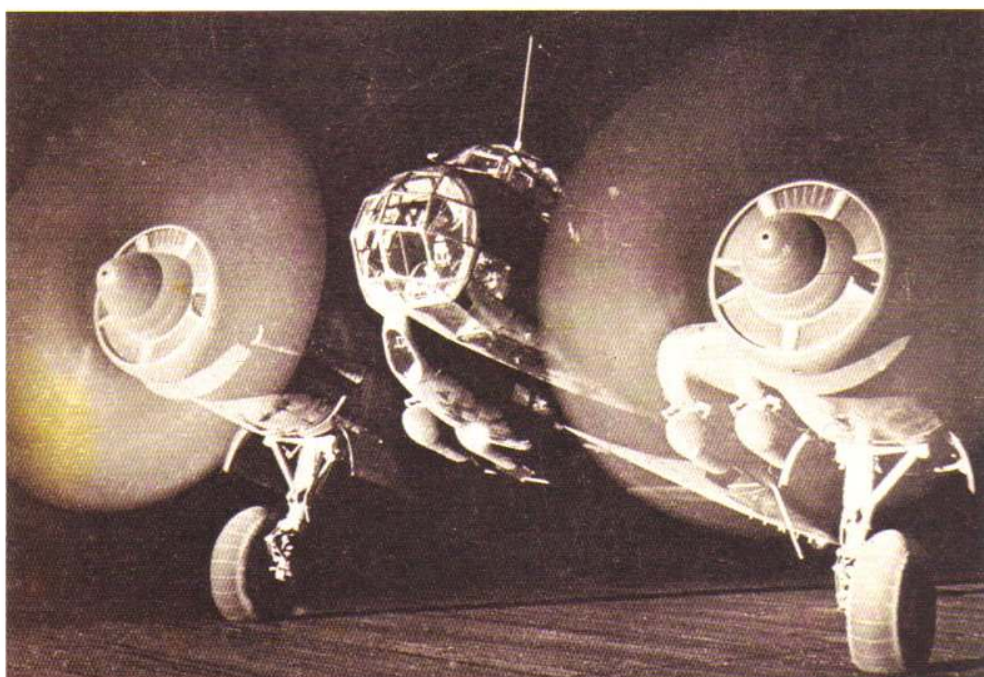
Occupation in the East
Camp commanders
Mauthausen

NAZI SYMBOLS

The Swastika
Afrika Korps
Cuff-titles



A-TO-Z OF THE THIRD REICH



IN THIS VOLUME OF **HITLER'S** **Third Reich**

SECRET HITLER FILES

From an early age, Hitler was devoted to Wagner, the music and the man. But how much was the composer to blame for the excesses of the Reich?

INSIDE THE THIRD REICH

Adolf Hitler was ruthless in his drive for power. Old friends who stood in his way were brutally set aside – fatally in some cases.



NAZI HORRORS

The Holocaust did not just happen to the Jews: the Nazis eliminated anyone who did not conform, be they gypsy, homosexual, or freemason.

WAR MACHINE

The Kriegsmarine fielded hundreds of craft during WWII on coastal protection and raiding duties. Most photogenic among them was the feared S-Boot.



HENCHMEN

Hans Frank was Hitler's personal lawyer, an educated bourgeois who brought the horrors of Nazi rule to conquered Poland.

HITLER'S BATTLES

No battle in history was as significant as Stalingrad. Before the fight for the city on the Volga, the Germans were winning the war. After the battle, their final defeat was inevitable.

